Vermont School Improvement Grant Application

Spring, 2010

Supervisory Union/ District Name: <u>Windham Northeast Supervisory Union</u>

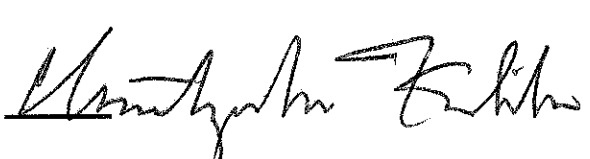Contact Person: <u>Christopher Kibbe</u>

Role: <u>Assistant Superintendent</u>

Email: <u>ckibbe@wnesu.net</u>

Phone: <u>802-463-9958</u>

This grant application must be submitted with:

❑ Statement of Agreement signed by superintendent
❑ School Improvement plans for each Tiered school included in the grant
❑ Budget
❑ All relevant attachments Tier I and II: (B, D2, E) Tier III (B, E)

Superintendent Signature: _____ _____

Date: ___6/15/10___

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LEA APPLICATION

DIRECTIONS: PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION AND RESPONSES FOR ALL TIERED SCHOOLS IN YOUR SU OR DISTRICT. FOR SOME DISTRICTS YOU MAY HAVE MULTIPLE ENTRIES IN THE TIER III SECTIONS. FOR SUPERVISORY UNIONS /DISTRICTS WITH ONLY TIER III SCHOOLS, GO TO THE APPROPRIATE PORTION OF SECTION B INDICATED BY THE ARROW.

In Vermont, for the purposes of the School Improvement Grant, when we refer to the LEA, we are referring to the Supervisory Union/District.

A. SCHOOLS TO BE SERVED: An LEA must include the following information with respect to the schools it will serve with a School Improvement Grant.

An LEA must identify each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school the LEA commits to serve and identify the model that the LEA will use in each Tier I and Tier II school.

SCHOOL NAME	NCES ID #	TIER I	TIER II	TIER III	INTERVENTION (TIER I AND II ONLY)			
					turnaround	restart	closure	transformation
Bellows Falls Middle School	024	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Westminster Schools	093	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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	Note: An LEA that has nine or more Tier I and Tier II schools may not implement the transformation model in more than 50 percent of those schools.	

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REQUIREMENT 1

(1) For each Tier I and Tier II school that the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must demonstrate that—
- The LEA has analyzed the needs of each school and selected an intervention for each school; and
- The LEA has the capacity to use school improvement funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application in order to implement, fully and effectively, the required activities of the school intervention model it has selected.

TO MEET REQUIREMENT (1) ABOVE:

Analyze the needs of each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school identified in the application and selected an intervention model (Tier I and Tier II) or activities (Tier III) for each school.

The Vermont Department of Education will evaluate the LEA's needs assessment application based on the following criteria:

Tier I and Tier II ONLY

1) **School Assets and Data Analysis:**
   a) Overview and assessment of school and community assets as well as needs
      Directions: *Attach self- assessment (Attachment B). Include summary of findings here:*

   b) Input from staff, public/private partnerships, parents and other community members
      i) For high schools this includes input from regional career center, postsecondary, non-profit and business partners and assessment of alternate pathways to graduation in the region.
      Directions: *Include evidence of input here:*

   c) Inclusion of analysis of recent and longitudinal New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) results and other relevant common local assessment system data for all students and for subgroups (demographic categories as well as any subgroup of students relevant to school needs including at minimum, students with disabilities, students eligible for free and reduced lunch, and English language learners)
      Directions: *Summarize conclusions from your analysis of data here:*

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d) Inclusion of the following data and **summarization of conclusions** reached after assessing the data:
  i. Graduation rates,
  ii. Drop-out rates,
  iii. Discipline referrals,
  iv. School action plan priorities,
  v. Highly qualified teacher data,
  vi. Child count by disability category
  vii. Percent of students with disabilities in the general education classroom more than 80% of the time
  viii. Number of out of district placements
  ix. Number of students in "alternative" day placements
  x. Number of ELL students
  xi. Number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch
  xii. Most recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey

NOTE: The data above for each Tiered school will be sent to you electronically.

Directions: Please include a summary of conclusions about the data above and any other relevant data here:

e) Inclusion of a guided self assessment, conducted by the Supervisory Union/District (SU) School Support team (this team must include the superintendent, principal of the school(s), curriculum coordinator and special education coordinator), on *Major Factors for Rapid Change in School Improvement* (See Attachment B – *Major Factors for Rapid Change Self Assessment Tool,* and Attachment C – *A Theory of Action*, Richardson, 2009) and agreement to participate in a comprehensive assessment conducted by an external evaluator of the VT DOE's choosing to inform school improvement implementation plan development and VTDOE school improvement support team service plan development. If such an assessment has already been conducted, the School Improvement Support Team will assess the scope of that assessment to determine if additional evaluation is warranted.

Directions: Attach self assessment Attachment B signed by the Superintendent and any accompanying narrative. Please note we have included a rubric you may choose to use to inform your responses on the self-assessment.

f) If a school has an existing school improvement plan and/or plan for restructuring under the Vermont State Accountability System and the related Commissioner's Required Actions, the School Improvement Support Team will review this plan with the SU School Support Team to assist them in incorporating new requirements under SIG and any information generated by the guided self-assessment. The initial school improvement plan is provided with the application and includes at minimum:

  ☐ Plan is attached
  i) ☐ Establishment of self-defined annual achievement goals tied to state accountability measures and achievement for all students and relevant student subgroups.

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ii) ☐ Those strategies defined as required actions through the state accountability system.

iii) ☐ Those strategies defined through the selection of one of the required models.

iv) ☐ Other strategies designed to assist in achieving school improvement targets.

v) ☐ A budget and timeline for implementing the plan.

Tier I and II Schools Only - Selection of an Intervention Model

1) **Demonstrated consideration of all four intervention models (see Attachment D1 - *Description of the Intervention Models*) using the *LEA Tier I and Tier II School Model Selection Assessment Tool* (Attachment D2) to justify the selected intervention linked to analysis of assessment and other relevant data.**

Based on the needs/self assessment and analysis of data, identify an intervention model (using Attachment D1) for each Tier I and Tier II school the LEA elects to serve. The justification for the selection of a specific model must be described in a narrative in the Model Selection Tool provided in Attachment D2.

Questions the LEA should consider in the selection of an intervention model are included in the Model Selection Tool (See Attachment D2) – *LEA Tier I and Tier II School Model Selection Assessment Tool*.
Directions: Complete page 1 of Attachment D2 and attach. Indicate the Intervention Model selected below:

Four School Improvement Models approved for Tier I and Tier II schools:

Turnaround Model: Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50% of the staff and grant the new principal sufficient operating flexibility (including staffing, calendars/time and budgeting) to implement fully a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.

Restart Model: Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.

School Closure: Close a school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the LEA that are higher achieving.

Transformation Model: Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness; (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms; (3) increase learning time and create Community-oriented schools; and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support

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(Section I.B.1 of 1003(g) allows an SEA to award SIG funds to an LEA for a Tier I or Tier II schools that has implemented in whole or in part, one of the models within the last two years so that the LEA and school can continue or complete the intervention being implemented. For example, if a Tier I or Tier II school has replaced its principal within the last two years, the SEA may award funds to the school's LEA to implement a turnaround model in the school even though the school will not be required to hire another new principal. A school that receives SIG funds in accordance with this flexibility must fully implement the selected model as required by the final requirements. In other words, if the school had been implementing the model only in part, it must use the funds it receives to expand its implementation so that it fully complies with the regulatory requirements. Addendum: the two years referenced with respect to this flexibility are the two years prior to the full implementation of the model in accordance with the notice using SIG funds for which and LEA has complete achievement data. In other words, with respect to the award of FY2009 funds for implementation in the 2010-2011 school year, the "last two years" are the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years.) – USED Guidance document March 24, 2010.

REQUIREMENT 1 (Continued)

2) The LEA has demonstrated that it has the capacity to use school improvement funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school identified in the LEA's application in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention in each of those schools.

Tier I and Tier II ONLY
1) **Vermont Department of Education will evaluate the LEA's capacity to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention using the following criteria:**
   a. Evidence of actions that the LEA/school has already taken related to the required elements of the chosen intervention.
      i. Evidence should include documentation of progress toward existing school improvement plan strategies that are substantially aligned with required elements of the chosen intervention (e.g., The LEA indicates they have already developed and implemented a consistent annual evaluation system for teachers that is informed by student growth and outcomes (both individual and in the aggregate) in this case the LEA would be required to provide the reviewers the documentation that outlines that system and the progress they have made toward implementation.)

   Directions: Describe here the steps already taken related to the chosen intervention. Please note that any required elements not reflected here must be addressed in the improvement plan

   b. Evidence of actions that the LEA has already taken related to Commissioner's Required Actions under the state accountability system of AYP.
      i. An end of year report documenting progress on implementing Commissioner's Required actions will be submitted with this application.

   Directions: Insert end of year report here:

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c. Provide a narrative description of current conditions (including barriers) related to the following:
Directions: *For each item (i through x) describe current conditions, including any barriers and how they will be addressed over the funding period.*

   i. Board support (e.g., minutes and/or board actions that indicate board support for the application and willingness to direct the school in implementing the forthcoming plan as defined.)

   ii. Union support (e.g., documentation of local union willingness to include revised evaluation systems in upcoming contracts, or amend existing contracts to include these changes.)

   iii. Financial capacity beyond SIG/sustainability (e.g., inclusion in budget of matching funds including use of other funding sources to support implementation efforts and sustain practices beyond the life of the grant)

   iv. Current evaluation practices (e.g., outline of current evaluation system for principals and teachers, including model, frequency of evaluation, etc.)

   v. Staff capacity/talent (e.g., description of staff experience level, special expertise, highlighting positions/individuals who will be actively engaged in implementing the school improvement plan and working closely with the state School Improvement Support team.)

   vi. Statewide and regional partnerships (e.g., agreements with ESAs, local agencies, and/or institutes of higher ed.)

   vii. Allocation of adequate time for teacher collaboration, job embedded professional development (i.e., as described in the LEA's application)

   viii. Data systems that inform on-going assessment of student progress and instructional practices (e.g., describing current use of systems like Aimsweb, Dibels, SWIS, etc.)

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ix. Parent and community partner support (i.e., support and engagement of local parent organizations, businesses, agencies and associations in school decision-making and activities.)

x. The sufficiency of the budget to implement the selected intervention fully and effectively in each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application as well as to support school improvement activities in Tier III schools throughout the period of availability of those funds (taking into account any waiver extending that period received by either the SEA or the LEA). (i.e., reviewers will look to see if the budget includes staffing, consulting, contracts with partners, materials, substitute costs or stipends, costs for transitioning to new or expanded schedules sufficient to sustain improvement activities described during the period of the grant and matching or other funding sources to sustain strategies beyond the life of the grant.)

2) **The school will conduct a guided self-assessment of each school using the rubric provided (See Attachment E) to determine capacity and readiness for implementing the school improvement plan.**
Directions: Attachment E to be completed by school staff. A compilation of the data on Attachment E with the Superintendent's signature should be attached and a summary of findings included here:

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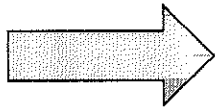
For Supervisory Unions/Districts with ONLY Tier III schools, begin Section B here.

For Supervisory Unions/District with Tier I or Tier II **AND** Tier III schools, enter information about Tier III schools here.

For all Tier III schools, the Vermont Department of Education (VTDOE) will evaluate the LEA's needs assessment application based on the following criteria:

1) **School Assets and Data Analysis:**
   a) Overview and assessment of school and community assets as well as needs
      Directions: Attach self- assessment (in Attachment B). Include summary of findings here:

      Bellows Falls Middle School
      School Assets and Data Analysis:
      1. a) Overview and assessment of school and community assets as well as needs
      1. BFMS has had an action plan, with measurable goals, updated annually
      that is used to direct improvement efforts. The plan is reviewed several
      times a year, either with full staff or a committee whose membership
      includes representatives from school teams. Parents and board members
      are invited to participate annually. Goals influence instructional decisions.
      School-wide improvement is viewed as a collective responsibility.
      Thought both the principal and SU share a goal for improvement, actual
      visions for each has not been fully articulated; and conversations about
      improvement are not based on these.
      2. Teacher teams periodically gather data to monitor the progress of students.
      We have implemented AIMSweb benchmarking this year, so we have
      three data collection points for reading and math. We started
      administering the Gates MacInitie last year, and have been doing the
      Scholastic Reading Inventory at grades 5 and 6 for some years. We also
      do a pre and post test of math computational skills. Data opportunities are
      provided as part of professional development in the building. We are
      building the culture of data analysis, goal setting and assessing results.
      Teachers are working in Critical Friends Groups to continuously improve
      their instruction. Central office staff communicate a sense of urgency
      around improvement, but have not been part of prioritizing a plan

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3. Our district has recently completed curriculum in core instructional areas, aligned to state standards. We are in the process of bringing this to teachers to prepare for implementation next year. We are working to change our schedule to allow teachers dedicated time for horizontal and vertical curriculum discussions during contract time. We are examining how to monitor whether the curriculum is being implemented with fidelity and integrity. We are uneven in how our regular ed and special ed teachers work together to modify grade level materials.

4. Grade level teams meet weekly to discuss goals and develop team plans. BFMS has established meeting norms to guide the work. Teams recognize they need to work together to be effective and use their time to examine data and share ways to improve instructional strategies to improve outcomes for students.

5. Some teams have regularly scheduled meetings and a plan on and when to review formative data, other teams are using mainly summative data. The AIMSweb testing system, implemented this year, is providing the means to do frequent probes, but was not fully utilized. Data is analyzed for areas of weakness, and adjustments are made across curriculum to address it.

Westminster- See attachement B summary.

b) Input from staff, public/private partnerships, parents and other community members
   i) For high schools this includes input from regional career center, postsecondary, non-profit and business partners and assessment of alternate pathways to graduation in the region.
  Directions: Include evidence of input here:

Bellows Falls Middle School-
PIRC (Parent Information Resource Center) has been working with our school to collect information on the strengths and weaknesses of our school from a family/community viewpoint; to prioritize the areas to address, and to develop an action plan to address the areas. Please see attachments of needs assessment and draft of action plan. Opportunities for parents to be involved include parent conferences, middle school awareness nights and new student orientation night, open house, and evening concerts and arts nights.

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c) Inclusion of analysis of recent and longitudinal New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) results and other relevant common local assessment system data for all students and for subgroups (demographic categories as well as any subgroup of students relevant to school needs including at minimum, students with disabilities, students eligible for free and reduced lunch, and English language learners)
Directions: Summarize conclusions from your analysis of data here:

Bellows Falls Middle School

1. c) A historical review of NECAP results shows a decline in math proficiency from 49.48% in 2005 to 42.60% in 2006, and to 37.65% in 2007. There was an increase in 2008 to 41%, but again a decrease in 2009 to 34%. This has been discouraging to staff, who have been implementing new practices annually since 2007, in an effort to raise scores. Our current cohorts are far below state averages, with our 6th grade at 25% proficiency, 7th at 45%, and 8th at 30%. Free and reduced performance in math shows a 10% lower score in the three years between 2005 and 2007, with a similar pattern of decline as the school as a whole; a 2% increase in 2008, the year that the school as a whole showed a 3% increase; and a 12% drop in the 2009 testing. Overall, math scores for free and reduced students are widening slightly each year. Item analysis showed our students in grades 6 and 8 below state averages in all subtopics. Grade 7 was below average in data, statistics and probability; and numbers and operations, but on par in geometry and measurement; and functions and algebra.

Reading analysis history shows gains and losses. Percent of proficient in 05 is 48%; in 2006 42%; in 2007 58%; in 2008 59%; and in 2009 51%. Interestingly, we failed to make AYP in 2008, but made it in 2009. Current cohort results show grade 6 at 32% proficient or above; grade 7 60%; and grade 8 51%. Results for students on free and reduced lunch mirrored the above pattern of scores, but 10 points lower. Item analysis showed weaknesses in all subtopics for grade 6 and 8; and performance at or above the state level in all subtopics for grade 7.

Westminster Schools:
Academic Data Analysis
Progress Monitoring

NECAP – Fall 2009

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Longitudinal data demonstrates that our school made improvements across the board in reading and math scores. Cohorts of students moving from third grade through seventh show growth over the span of the testing years.

Reading

Group (second grade)	Initial Score	2009 Score	Growth
2005	58%	71%	13%
2006	58%	74%	16%
2007	64%	68%	4%
2008	53%	52%	-1%

Mathematics

Group (second grade)	Initial score	2009 Score	Growth
2005	58%	71%	13%
2006	61%	59%	-2%
2007	60%	67%	7%
2008	52%	48%	-4%

The gap between the "free and reduced lunch" category of students (reading – 40%, math -48% proficient) and the not free and reduced category of students (reading -80%, math -76% proficient) widens each year . Whatever strategies we have been using for "all students" need to be re-examined to develop more effective practices for the "FRL" category. In addition, 64% of our non-special education students are proficient and only 32% of our special education students achieve proficiency. These two categories are significant to the work we are doing as we move into the future and monitor student progress.

Further analysis is being done to determine where our students struggle the most – primarily we know that constructed response questions give us the most difficulty. Therefore we have focused on developing writing fluency in our early grades, using a process approach to writing (drafts, sharing, editing and publishing) Students who write think critically, and thinking critically will enable these children to handle a variety of tasks: from testing to life applications.

In 2009 we were identified for the second time as not making the AYP benchmarks. This forced us to think in open-minded critical terms of our practices. We reexamined everything from curriculum, to structures, to instructional practices in an effort to make decision about what we were able to do to change the outcomes for our students. We developed guiding beliefs to base decision on – checking our personal differences at the door and committed ourselves to develop a school where all students can succeed.

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The Westminster Schools are on a path of continuous improvement – framed by our need to address assessment results. The data from the 2008 NECAP assessment demonstrated lack of improvement in reading and math over the previous year. When we began looking at our results, we talked as a staff at what we saw, what we knew, and what we believed to be true. Throughout this process, teachers worked to look beneath the results in reading and mathematics. There were some classroom level assessments that indicated students were stuck in patterns of learning that impacted performance. These patterns were preventing them from progressing and they eventually plateau.

Our students were learning to read – many of them very well – however, just as many students were failing to achieve reading fluency. This lack of automaticity in reading prevents students from comprehending material that is of an increasing level of difficulty. We noticed students did very well on high frequency words in isolation, making them very accurate readers. However, this prevents reading words in phrases, smoothly and with expression that leads to meaning.

Fluency has been seen in the research as an important indicator of proficient reading. Research describes fluency as "the ability to recognize words rapidly and accurately." Students who read word by word, or rely on decoding strategies, cannot read fluently and consequently lose meaning when material becomes more difficult (longer). The development of fluency means that readers have more of their "cognitive capacity" available for higher level processing. Given the research confirms what we noticed in our own students we chose to focus on improving student fluency – beginning with letter naming/recognition in kindergarten and continuing through sixth grade. We acknowledge that the goal of reading instruction is life-long readers, who have comprehension strategies that can be used in a variety of situations. In fact, we believe the truly fluent reader must also be able to demonstrate a level of comprehension of material.

Similarly, we spent time looking at the results of our assessments in the area of mathematics. We discovered that our students lacked computation skill fluency. We were surprised as we had been told for many years that we should focus our teaching on problem solving strategies. We continued using the Vermont Portfolio pieces in mathematics, even after Vermont discontinued its requirement. Students were, in fact, using similar skills in math as they used in reading. The data demonstrates that in reading our students are decoders, while in math, they are counters. The "counting on" strategy was taught beginning in kindergarten as a way to assist students in solving operations in addition and subtraction. We did not spend enough time developing students' abilities in number sense – including clustering, subitizing, and identifying patterns. Consequently, many of our students, while understanding how to solve problems, take an inordinate amount of time –and then frequently get incorrect answers. Students' explanations of how they solve problems fall short because their thought processes are often not deep enough, reveal accurate but low level strategies, and lack sufficient detail. Therefore, we are revising our teaching methods to include earlier mastery of operations (strategies not rote memorization), with a focus on number sense, patterns, and making our processes automatic.

We chose to use assessments in the area of fluency and computational skills in all grades. In kindergarten we are monitoring student progress, first in letter and number identification and then in quantity discrimination. In first grade we assess letter identification and phonemic awareness (and fluency) for reading and fluency in basic operations in addition and

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subtraction. We then move to reading fluency and mastery of basic operations in addition and subtraction in second grade. Third through sixth grade students are assessed on fluency (words correct per minute) and computation through multiplying and division (including fractions). We are using AIMSWeb for a progress monitoring tool.

While this tool is not comprehensive it presents us with regular data points that can be used to analyze student progress. We can look at grade clusters, individual progress, teachers, and student outcomes as compared to targets. The tool also assists in communicating with families about student performance in a timely manner.

Reading
Students were monitored in developing reading fluency throughout the year in 2009-10. We follow each child as they develop foundation skills in reading, building fluency and comprehension skills.
We assessed letter sounds, phonemic awareness and nonsense words in our emerging readers in first grade.

CBM	Fall-median	Winter-median	Spring - median
Word Fluency	10		27
Phonemic Segmentation	20	30	
Nonsense words	10	26	53

Twenty-nine first graders were below our targets in the fall – now, seven were well above the target in the spring. All students showed gains – averaging growth of at least ten words. When students are able to recognize letters, know sounds, can blend sounds, and separate sounds in a word that they are prepared to become readers.

Across the school we progress monitored reading fluency in grades 2 -6 using Aimsweb.

Grade	N	WCPM Target	Above	Approaching	Below	Well Below	Rate of Improvement
Second	16	102	4	1	10	1	40 WCPM
Third	36	120	10	2	15	9	30 WCPM
Fourth	26	132	1	3	19	3	30 WCPM
Fifth	31	148	16	6	5	2	30 WCPM
Sixth	28	160	12	5	13	0	30 WCPM

We used Aimsweb CBM- computation assessments in grades 2-6 for progress monitoring with a target of correct digits.

Grade	N	Target	Above	Approaching	Below	Well Below
Second	21	24	9	4	5	3
Third	35	31	7	11	12	5
Fourth	24	53	6	5	10	3
Fifth	31	52	2	16	8	5

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5/10/2010

Sixth	28	36	7	9	8	4

We have work to do across the school to improve fluency in math and reading— offering appropriate material, practice reading, direct instruction, increasing time reading (before and after school, summer school, etc.) and partnering with parents. Finding the right intervention for each student is still a struggle for our staff. In reviewing AYP interventions, it is obvious that we over-use some interventions, while not utilizing other strategies. Fine tuning our process – groupings, instruction with fidelity and integrity will take additional work. We have systems in place that will serve us well. Taking a look at time will be important – how often is key instruction time interrupted? Missed? Can we adjust our schedule so that reading and math instruction occurs without interruption?

d) Inclusion of the following data and **summarization of conclusions** reached after assessing the data:
   i. Graduation rates,
   ii. Drop-out rates,
   iii. Discipline referrals,
   iv. School action plan priorities,
   v. Highly qualified teacher data,
   vi. Child count by disability category
   vii. Percent of students with disabilities in the general education classroom more than 80% of the time
   viii. Number of out of district placements
   ix. Number of students in "alternative" day placements
   x. Number of ELL students
   xi. Number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch
   xii. Most recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Directions: Please include a summary of conclusions about the data above and any other relevant data here:
   See attached data.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS REPORT   June 11, 2010

SCHOOL	TOTAL	Licensure Levels*			College Degree			HQT
		% LEVEL I	% LEVEL II	% LEVEL I & II	% PROV.	% BA	% MA	%HQT
BF MIDDLE SCHOOL	31	3%	77%	3%	19%	52%	48%	100%

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* Licensure Levels may not add up to 100% because teachers may possess multiple licenses.

Bellows Falls Middle School

1. d) BFMS recognizes that graduation and drop out rates are influenced by a students total school experience. We plan in increase college and career exposure activities. We are working on a skills acquisition proposal that will make participation in educational supports after school and during the summer mandatory, in an effort to increase student achievement. In addition, we are working hard to align curriculum and improve pedagogy. We believe that increasing student involvement and learning will result in fewer drop outs. We have also increased our monitoring of absences and tardies, and have worked more aggressively with families to support student attendance. We have sent staff to a state workshop on dropout prevention at the middle school level. The Kindergarten Readiness Questionnaire is the assessment tool used throughout Vermont to measure readiness for kindergarten in five developmental domains. The most recent results of this assessment, FY 2007, show that only 19% of all WNESU kindergarteners met the standard for readiness in all five domains. One striking need is in the area of social/ emotional development (element 3), where WNESU kindergarteners measured 17% lower than the state average. Kindergarten teachers report that social emotional readiness is one of the most important domains to determine success in school. We recognize that we must continue to support early childhood initiatives and supports in the district. Discipline referrals are likely to be up over last year. We have partially implemented PBIS, and will go to full implementation next year. We have a new assistant principal that has been much more on top of things, and recorded into our student information system with more fidelity. We believe that we will see reductions in discipline for next year.

It is difficult to prioritize the action plan goals. Both math and reading remain low, but math would take a slight priority edge over reading. The climate issues tie into student performance and success, and the writing goals are important because every test has a writing component.

Next year, all teachers at BFMS are highly qualified in their subject areas. We have had several sections of reading at grades 7 and 8 that are taught by those holding other certifications, but with a team teacher who is HQT.

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Child Count by disability category:
Development delay 0
Learning Impairment 3
Specific Learning Disability 16
Visual Impairment 0
Deafness/Hard of Hearing 0
Speech or Language Impairment 5
Orthopedic Impairment 0
Other Health Impairment 18
Emotional Disturbance 6
Autism Spectrum Disorder 2
Deaf-Blindness 0
Multiple Disabilities 2
We believe that we can reduce the number of students in the SLD category
by strengthening our overall system for all students.
% if students with disabilities in the general education classroom more
than 80% of the time: Our % has fallen over the last few years. This is partially
due to the development of programs in the building for emotionally/behaviorally
challenged students, and for cognitively/multiply handicapped students. The
EBD program was instituted in order to return our students from out of district
placements. We will be analyzing student IEP's and progress in the general
curriculum and toward IEP goals and the end of this year and the beginning of
next to see if we can increase the amount of time spent in general education
programming.
The number of out of district placement is not accurate. We believe that
students on ISP's in parental placements in private schools located geographically
in the district are being represented as our students. We will be reviewing how
we input the data for future reports. The state data supplied to me says we had 10
students in out of district placement 07-08, my first year here, and I believe we
had 7. The current year is showing 6 out of district placements, and I believe I
have two. One of those two is court placed out of state; the other will age out to
the high school for next year. We have no students in alternative day placements.
ELL also seems out of line. The state data shows 9 last year and 5 this
year, but I understood us to have 4 last year and 2 this year. The two here this
year will go to the high school next year.
The number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch has grown in
three years from 44% in 07-08, to 47% last year, to 55% this year, per the state's

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data. The most recent calculation in the building put us at 61%. Though we recognize that students living in reduced circumstances may come to us with lower exposure to academically enriching environments, we are determined to take them from where they are and make efforts to increase their academic growth rate to one year plus.

According to the 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 27% of all students grades 8-12 were in a physical fight in the past 12 months. 48% of all 8th graders reported fighting. 36% of 8th graders said that someone had stolen or damaged their property on school property during the past 12 months. Only 23% of WNESU 8th – 12th grade students think there is great risk in harming themselves by "drinking one or two alcoholic drinks nearly every day," and less than half think there is great risk in "using marijuana regularly". The past 30 day use of marijuana in 2007 was 26% of WNESU vs. 21% for the stat). The percentage of students who report current (30 day) alcohol use is 43% of WNESU vs. 39% for the state. Further, 58% of students know an adult who has used marijuana, cocaine, or another illegal drug during the past year. 25%-31% of youth report that their parents seldom or never talk to them about school. Almost 1/3 (31%) of eighth graders reported that they had not eaten one meal in the last 10 days with their family. Only 20% of Windham County youth spend one or more hours per week in clubs or organizations outside of school (not including sports), and only 8% of local youth spend three hours or more per week. 40.9% of WNESU students do not feel like they matter to people and feel undervalued based on the YRBS. Info in the YRBS of 2009 shows that in our school district, 31% of our 8th graders drank alcohol in the past 30 days, as opposed to 18% of 8th graders statewide, and 16% nationwide. In Vermont, 8 % of 8th grade students report using marijuana during the past 30 days. In our school district, the rate is double this amount, at 16 % and by 12th grade they are at 40%. Nationwide, past year use was reported by 11.8 percent of 8th graders. Our statistic of 16% use in the last month indicates a higher frequency of use as well as more kids having used. 22 % of our 8th graders report that they have had sexual intercourse. (15% is the statewide average) Of the seniors, 78% have had sex.

All of this data gives us lots of areas that we need to think about. We provide our health teachers with training and curriculum materials on making healthy choices. Health is offered at 7/8 level, and family/consumer science at 5/6. We are developing a sequence so that choices skills and healthy behavior develop start at the 5/6 level. We also try to increase time that students spend in organized activities by increasing our co-curricular offerings and through our 21C

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programming. We have a 30% participation rate among our students in 21C, and our sports and music programs enjoy a strong enrollment. We are concerned about the level of drug and alcohol use in terms of brain development for our students. Studies show that these can influence brain development in a very negative way, and that the brain does not recover over time.

e) Inclusion of a guided self assessment, conducted by the SU School Support team and for each school, on *Major Factors for Rapid Change in School Improvement* (See Attachment B – *Major Factors for Rapid Change Self Assessment Tool*, and Attachment C – *A Theory of Action*, Richardson, 2009). For schools that have been in Corrective Action under the state accountability system for 4 years or more, this includes an agreement to participate in an assessment conducted by an external evaluator of the VT DOE's choosing. If such an assessment has already been conducted, the School Improvement Support team will assess the scope of that assessment to determine if additional evaluation is warranted.
Directions: Attach self-assessment (Attachment B) signed by the Superintendent and include any accompanying narrative here. Please note we have included a rubric you may choose to use to inform your responses on the self-assessment.
> **Bellows Falls Middle School**
Refer to 1a for narrative; signed attachment B enclosed.

f) If a school has an existing school improvement plan and/or plan for restructuring under the Vermont State Accountability System and the related Commissioner's Required Actions, the School Improvement Support team will review this plan with the SU School Support team and school leadership team to assist them in incorporating any new strategies established by this application, into their plan.
This item is addressed in h) ii) below.

g) The application reflects consideration of the required and permissible elements as outlined in the Transformation model and addresses which of those strategies it is committed to pursuing with these funds.
Directions: Indicate the required and permissible activities considered:
> *Bellows Falls Middle School*
1. g) Both the district admin team and the building leadership team have discussed the components of the transformation model. At the district level, a new evaluation tool based on the Danielson model was piloted this year. This model does not include student growth as a significant factor. The building level leadership team has discussed implementation of models of instruction based on student needs. Professional development is already located primarily in the building and district. We have been working with the Parent Resource Information Center to increase community and family engagement. We have examined changing our schedule to increase learning time and teacher

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collaboration and data analysis time.

The Westminster Schools are committed to pursuing the following elements:
* *providing job-embedded professional devleopment designted to build capacity and support staff*
* *continuous use of datato inform and differentiate instruction..*

h) The initial school improvement plan is provided with the application and includes at minimum:

        ☒ Plan is attached

i) ☒ Establishment of self-defined annual achievement goals tied to state accountability measures and achievement for all students and relevant student subgroups.

ii) ☒ Those strategies defined as required actions through the state accountability system.

iii) ☐ One of the required elements of the SIG Transformation Model (See Attachment F – SIG Transformation Model Required and Permissible Strategies) as it related to the data analysis and school improvement plan.
    Directions: *Indicate which required element of the Transformation Model is included in the Improvement plan*
        Bellows Falls Middle School

1. h) Action Plan provided.

h) iii)Though BFMS is piloting or implementing several components of the transformation model, we will focus on providing job embedded professional development designed to build capacity and support staff. Next year, each core academic teacher in the building will see 125 students daily (up from 45 to 90 in previous years) This increase in numbers is due to budget reductions. We will need to support teachers in how to manage educational improvement for the larger teaching load, as well as increase the quality of instructional deliver.

iv) ☐ Other strategies designed to assist in achieving school improvement targets.

REQUIREMENT 1 (Continued)

2) The LEA has demonstrated that it has the capacity to use school improvement funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school identified in the LEA's application in order to implement fully and effectively the selected intervention in each of those schools.
Direction: *Review your budget and school improvement plan(s) to assure adequate resources have been allocated to effectively implement each plan.*

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3) **The school will conduct a guided self-assessment of each school using the rubric provided (See Attachment E) to determine capacity and readiness for implementing the school improvement plan.**
Directions: *Attachment E to be completed by school staff. A compilation of the data on Attachment E with the Superintendent's signature should be attached and a summary of findings included here:*
    See attachment.

REQUIREMENT 2

(2) If the LEA is not applying to serve each Tier I school, the LEA must explain why it lacks capacity to serve each Tier I school.

TO MEET REQUIREMENT 2 ABOVE:
Vermont has no LEA with more than one Tier I school therefore this is not applicable.

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REQUIREMENT 3

(3) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to—
- Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements;
- Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality;
- Align other resources with the interventions;
- Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable its schools to implement the interventions fully and effectively; and
- Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.

TO MEET REQUIREMENT 3 ABOVE:

The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to—
- Design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements;
- Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality;
- Align other resources with the interventions;
- Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable its schools to implement the interventions fully and effectively; and
- Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.

1) **The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements.**
    - For Tier I and II schools:
        - One of four interventions has been identified and a rationale for their selection has been adequately described and documented.
        - The application includes the use of a guided self assessment to inform school improvement action planning and plans to complete a comprehensive assessment conducted by an external evaluator to inform continued school improvement plan implementation.
        - All required elements of the selected intervention have been addressed so as to fully and effectively implement the selected model within the three year timeline of the grant.

        These items have been previously addressed
        - For Tier I and Tier II schools, external coaching capacity (someone not under the supervision of the principal) has been identified to provide intensive technical assistance and guide the implementation process.

        Directions: Describe how the LEA will address this requirement:

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- For Tier I, II, and III schools:
  - o The application includes the use of a guided self assessment to inform school improvement action planning.

  This item has been previously addressed.
  - o The application includes a commitment to work with the state School Improvement Support team in the development and execution of a school improvement implementation plan that assesses and incorporates effective school improvement strategies already under way and includes required (for Tier I and II) and permissible strategies
  - o The application includes a commitment to designate local leadership team (SU School Support team) responsible for directing and reporting on the progress of implementing defined elements. This team must include the superintendent, the principal of the school(s), the curriculum coordinator and the special education coordinator.

  These items are addressed in the "Statement of Agreement"
  - o Application reflects school improvement strategies already in progress.

  This item has been previously addressed.
  - o Evidence-based practices are selected and plans to implement consider measures necessary to ensure fidelity of implementation. (e.g., the application includes approaches that have a research base reflecting effectiveness in improving instruction in the areas of concern such as mathematics or literacy; the application also includes approaches that provide a systemic model for improving instruction and learning and reflects the preparative and evaluative components of sustainable implementation such as achieving readiness to implement, communicating progress, evaluating outcomes, and providing supervisory union/district support through funding, allocation of personnel, and time for professional development, collaboration and planning.)

  Directions: Describe any measures taken to insure fidelity of implementation of strategies in the plan or refer to the appropriate section of the improvement plan where this is addressed.

  The action plans (see attachments) provide assessments within each objective area. This documentation will be sufficient to assess how the strategies were implemented and what the results were. Steps to ensure the fidelity of implementation will include: documenting relationships of interventions to improved student outcomes; clearly stating duties and responsibilities of participants and implementation steps of strategies; using Critical Friends Groups as a method for feedback and ongoing adjustment of interventions as well as a data examination vehicle.

  - o The application includes a commitment to provide the following required data elements annually:
    - 1.) Number of minutes within the school year
    - 2.) Student participation rate on State assessments in reading/language arts and in mathematics, by student subgroup
    - 3.) Dropout rate
    - 4.) Student attendance rate
    - 5.) Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (i.e. AP/IB), early college high schools, or dual enrollment classes

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6.) Discipline incidents

7.) Truants

8.) Distribution of teachers by performance level on an LEA's teacher evaluation system (once that system is up and running)

9.) Teacher attendance rate

Directions: Please provide data for items 1 and 5-9 above to be used as baseline measures.
See attached data.

For Tier I, II, and III schools:

2) **The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to Outline the need for recruitment of external providers in effectively implementing the defined school improvement plans and parameters which will be considered in ensuring quality and fit. Some recommendations from the** *Handbook on Effective Implementation of School Improvement Grants* **(Perlman and Redding, eds.; 2010) follow:**
   a. Identify unambiguous reasons for hiring an external provider.
   b. Engage stakeholders about the need to hire external providers.
   c. Articulate specific goals for the relationship with the external provider.
   d. Budget adequate funding to support relationship with external provider for duration of contract;
   e. Develop a process for selecting external providers whose experience and qualifications match the specified goals.
   f. Negotiate a contract outlining roles and responsibilities of the external provider as well as the district and relevant schools.
   g. Provide support as needed and appropriate.
   h. Evaluate external provider's progress toward goals.
   i. Define consequences for failure (e.g., termination or modification of contract).

Directions: Summarize your reasons for contracting with an external provider (this includes school coach and any content providers) giving consideration to items a) through i) as applicable.

The WNESU has limited resources to support implementation of initiatives with our existing personnel. Responsibility for curriculum and assessment development as well as all other district initiatives is shared between the building principals and the administrators at the SU. To this end, we have successfully employed a model using consultants employed mostly through CFG funds. This has been a productive endeavor and has resulted in curriculum development in five subject areas over the past three years. While we plan to restructure WNESU staffing in the next two years, it is unlikely that this will result in substantially more time for district support of the implementation of initiatives. Therefore, it is imperative that we use external providers to implement these strategies. We have designed effective procedures within the business office to ensure that we are in compliance with State and Federal regulations regarding the documentation and expenditure of these funds.

For Tier I, II, and III schools:

3) **LEA agrees to collaborate and cooperate with state organized trainings for Supervisory Union administrators, principals, teachers and paraprofessionals, informational meetings, and trainings provided through the state.**
This item is addressed in the "Statement of Agreement"

For Tier I, II, and III schools:

4) **The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to Align other resources with the interventions.**
   - The LEA plan must be comprehensive and systemic in its approach. Reviewers will look to the budget and school improvement plan to assess the alignment and allocation of resources (e.g., personnel, percent of time committed, recognition of and/or effort to assess and realign existing initiatives and funds from other sources to support school improvement goals, refocusing existing professional development and in-service days to support training needs related to improvement, etc.) :
     Directions: Please review budget and school improvement plan to assure items below are addressed and check appropriate boxes
     - ☒ Human resources
     - ☒ Fiscal resources
     - ☒ Time and schedule
     - ☒ Existing Initiatives
     - ☒ Related activities
     - ☒ Partnerships
     - ☒ Alignment of PD activities

For Tier I, II, and III schools

5) **The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to Modify its practices or policies, if necessary, to enable it to implement the interventions fully and effectively.**
   - The LEA agrees to use an external evaluation (Tier I and II ONLY) and internal review process to identify any current practices or policies that are barriers to a full and effective implementation of the selected intervention and commit to eliminating barriers through the implementation process. This process will also identify areas where a consolidation of focus would benefit the school improvement process (such as multiple committees focusing on similar outcomes – or with no defined outcomes) and work to converge efforts on common goals and outcomes.
   - Inclusion of actions to address those barriers in the plan, utilizing the following, as applicable:
     - ○ Board and Union letters of recognition or memorandum of understanding that document commitment to modify or amend current agreements, practices, and procedures to allow full and effective implementation of the transformation model.
     - ○ Agreements for operational flexibility to implement reform at the school level.
     - ○ Evidence of need for waivers to State Board of Education rules, when appropriate.
   Directions: Identify barriers and any actions you have taken or will take to address these barriers. (Tier I an II can reference Requirement 1 1) c. i-ix)

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Teachers' attitudes that students who are from low SES families or that have special needs are not able to excel are a barrier to improvement in our schools. Both schools are sending a team to the Roadmanps to Roots conference at Castleton State this summer. Some teachers have received Ruby Payne training in the past.

Some middle school teachers believe that the sending schools do not do a good job of preparing their students to succeed. In addition, they blame the differing instructional programs and the fact that students enter their school at three different grade levels as problems that result in difficulties in educating their pupils. Curriculum implementation efforts over the next few years will emphasize the importance of adhering to the curriculum, not to a specifice program of instruction.

Some teachers believe that student discipline problems are the responsibiliy of the administration instead of assuming the primary role in dealing with students' misbehavior. Westminster school is working with a service provider at this time to improve overall school discipline. BFMS is implementing the PBiS system.

Some teachers believe that they do not have primary responsibility of special needs students. Current focused monitoring process that the district is engaged in emphasizes the importance of the overall educational support system. Proposed plan will have extensive regular education focus.

For Tier I, II, and III schools
6) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to Sustain the reforms after the funding period ends.
For each item below describe how it will be addressed over the funding period
The LEA must:
- Include strategies that build local capacity and methodologies that ensure interventions are integrated into the culture and routine practice of the school. (e.g., if student discipline and behavior is a significant factor to consider in working to raise achievement levels for students, the plan goes beyond providing individualized interventions and reflects a systemic approach to improving levels of student time on task and participation in the classroom by implementing or reconstituting an evidence based model to address school climate and culture such as Positive Behavioral Supports or Responsive Classroom. These models build local capacity to intervene early and support students within the school community with the least amount of intervention to achieve the greatest result and create sustainability by involving the whole school community in the implementation process.)

Directions: Describe here or refer to appropriate section of your plan or budget.

The LEA has been active in the development of new curriculum documents for math and literacy (as well as in other areas) and these curricula have been approved by the Supervisory Union Board of Directors. The next steps in both of these areas is the implementation of the curriculum and the further development of a system of local and district assessments. The LEA continues to support these efforts through strategies in the Consolidated Federal Grant that provide consultants who work with the district in both math and literacy.

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In addition, the LEA has implemented a data-based approch to instructional interventions based upon the Response to Intervention model for students. Training in this area has been provided and teachers have been funded through the CFG who work as data facilitators in a number of schools, including the Bellows Falls Middle School, and a reading coach at the Westminster Schools. To support this effort the LEA has funded AIMSWeb and Lexia Reading with the ARRA funds and plans to continue this funding for the schools at the LEA level using CFG funding. Critical friends and professional learning community training, which supports the data-based approach to improving instruction are provided through the CFG on a continuing basis.

The LEA also supports the Responsive Classroom approach to improving school climate through the CFG and will support the efforts of the BFMS to implement the PBiS to address discipline issues at that school so that students have more on task time and fewer interruptions during the course of the instructional day.

The LEA has spearheaded a drive to provide a Medicaid funded high quality preschool instruction to students across the districts. In the upcoming school year, there will be three WNESU Early Education Centers in operation, including a new one at the Westminster School. These centers help students to arrive in kindergarten better prepared to learn and, additionally, provide a setting in which LEA special educators can evaluate children and provide interventions.

- Identify local fiscal and structural support for the interventions where applicable beyond the life of the grant.

Directions: Describe how the budget will support on-going activities beyond the grant funding period.

Steps have been taken at the local level to provide on-going support for grant activites throughout and beyond the funding period. At the BFMS, a data facilitator has been funded at the local level. Support continues for the assistant principal position, which provides important support for the principal to serve as the instructional leader. In Westminster, it is presumed that the school board will make every effort to continue the two positions it has that provide coaching and data facilitation. The addition of a part time SIG grant coordinator will help the schools focus on implenting the strategies and moving the change process forward.

At the SU level, conversations are taking place that involve a restructuring effort that will allow the LEA to provide more support to curriculum implementation and school improvement efforts. It is anticipated that this restructuring will lead to the creation of a part time curriculum coordinator position. This will allow building principals, who now must head up district curriculum committees, to spend more time evaluating teachers and engaging in other building-based activities that support student learning.

- Identify other funding sources that will be used to complement SIG funds received in supporting the implementation of defined strategies. These could include other federal programs, as well as state and local funds and should also highlight funds that will be used to sustain the intervention beyond three-year grant period.

Ensure that all funding sources are identified in the plan.

The LEA is fully committed to continuing funding both ongoing and future school improvement strategies through both the IDEA and CFG grants. We expect to employ a combination grant manager and curriculum coordinator using a combination of these funds in the very near future. The local budgets will also be used to sustain these strategies where necessary. The

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Rockingham School Board has recently made the improvement of the BFMS one of their top priorities in a recent goal-setting session. Westminster has demonstrated ongoing support for the improvement efforts that the principal has undertaken.

- Plan for induction and mentoring of new staff.
Directions: Describe plans for induction and mentoring of new staff.

The WNESU has an ongoing system of mentoring for new teachers and teachers new to an assignment. It is funded through the Consolidated Federal Grant. All new staff are assigned mentors. Post mentoring surveys from both mentors and mentees indicate a high level of satisfaction with this system. Consideration will be given in this year's CFG to funding a mentoring coordinator position to assist in these efforts.

- Create a district level team that examines and reports on achievement levels for all students and subgroups for all schools in the supervisory union on a bi-annual basis. State assessment results are communicated annually to teachers, staff, family and community members and school boards. Appropriate response strategies are incorporated into school action plans.

Include these activities as responsibilities of the SU/District School Support Team

The activites above are the responsibility of the SU/District School Support Team. This team currently includes the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, the director of student services , and the buidling principals. Since this is a new team, it is anticipated that additional personnel will eventually serve on this team.

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REQUIREMENT 4

(4) The LEA must include a timeline delineating the steps it will take to implement the selected intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application.

TO MEET REQUIREMENTS (4) ABOVE –

The LEA must include a timeline delineating the steps it will take to implement the selected intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application.

Required items have been covered in Requirements 1 and/or 3 above.

REQUIREMENT 5

(5) The LEA must describe the annual goals for student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics that it has established in order to monitor its Tier I and Tier II schools that receive school improvement funds.

T0 MEET REQUIREMENT (5) ABOVE –

In its application and school improvement implementation plan, the LEA must articulate annual goals (subject to the approval of the SEA) for 2010-2013 for student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics that it has established in order to monitor its Tier I and Tier II schools that receive school improvement funds.

Directions: Discuss reading and math goals here

REQUIREMENT 6

(6) For each Tier III school the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must identify the services the school will receive or the activities the school will implement.

TO MEET REQUIREMENT (6) ABOVE -

For each Tier III school the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must identify the services the school will receive or the activities the school will implement as defined in the design section above.

Directions: Identify services Tier III schools will receive and/or activities schools will implement or reference appropriate sections of improvement plan

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Westminster plans to implement the following activities:

-Purchase level books for each grade level at Westminster Schools.
-Purchase Professional Development materials to support reading interventions,differentiation and inculsion at the Westminster Schools.
-Data facilitator to assist school based teams in using data to plan instruction in literacy at the Westminster Schools.
-PLC meetings at the Westminster Schools to support teachers implementing new WNESU curriculum, to include facilitator, substitute, materials and food.
-Lexia Reading computer softwared to support students development of phoneme awareness, phonics, and
-Symphony Math computar software to support student development of math computation skills.
-MathRrecovery training for a Westminster Schools staff member to bring intervention strategy to the Westminster Schools. To include,registration, travel expenses, lodging, materials and substitutes.
-Westminster Schools staff will work with Mahesh Sharma to develop effective math instruction,implementing new WNESU curriculum, provide feedback to teachers, and developing formative math assessments
-Purchase math materials for lending library for students to use at home.
-Responsive Classroom training for an onsite teacher-leader who will serve as a staff development coach for Westminster Schools. To inlcude RC institutes, teacher stipend, travel, lodging, food, materials and cosultant follow-up.
-Develop the Student Social Action Committee to support student social learning, run no-blame meetings and develop in-school resources for a healthy school climate. To include on-site training from the Child Today (Center for Social Inclusion), Kim John Payne, substitutes, materials and food.
-Stipend for teacher leadership team to attend the Roots to Roadmaps Conference at Castleton College in July 2010.
-Preschool Partner agreements to support quality preschool opportunity for 3 and 4 year olds
-Contract with FCES to connect elementary students to experiences that will enhance college awareness.
-Training and support for teacher teams to develop co-teaching model at each grade level. To include training, consultation, food, substitutes, and stipends.
-Develop leadership team capacity to participate in classroom walk-throughs to enhance instruction and teacher effective practices. Training, support, materials, and substitutes.
-Provide training and consultation to Westminster Schools principal to improve teacher evaluation and feedback process. Include mentoring, materials, workshops, materials, webinars, and travel expenses.

Bellows Falls Middle School Plans to Implement the Following Activities:

-Purchase Professional Development materials to support reading interventions,differentiation and inculsion
-Provide certified teachers to work with students not proficient in afterschool program
-Data facilitator to assist school based teams in using data to plan instruction in literacy

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-PLC meetings to support teachers implementing new WNESU curriculum, to include facilitator, substitute, materials and food.
-Provide stipend for lead teacher to coordinate professional development and oversee fidelity to implementation
-Lexia Reading computer software to support reading development
-Provide training to teachers on writing supports of Collins and Kansas
-Symphony Math (to grade 4 skills) computar software to support student development of math computation skills.
-Buy math games as recommended by Mahesh Sharma, math consultant, to develop numeracy
-Provide certified teachers to work with students not proficient in afterschool program
-MathRrecovery training for a staff member to implement this intervention strategy. To include,registration, travel expenses, lodging, materials and substitutes.
-Purchase Study Island math (Grades 5-8) support program to develop computational math skills (Training, software)
-Staff will work with Mahesh Sharma to develop effective math instruction,implementing new WNESU curriculum, provide feedback to teachers, and developing formative math assessments
-Provide stipend for lead teacher to coordinate professional development and oversee fidelity to implementation
-Purchase math books and supplemental teacher materials for students in grades 5/6
-Purchase additional math books for students in grades 7/8 to allow books to be taken home
-Purchase math materials for lending library for students to use at home.
-Provide anti bully and harassment programming
-Provide stipend and training expenses for an advisor for Junior National Honor Society in order to create positive leadership experiences and recognition for students
-Provide stipend and training expenses for an advisor for Peer Mediator in order to foster a positive climate for students and reduce bullying and teasing
-Hire tutor coordinator to develop list of volunteer tutors and coordinate scheduling during and after school and on weekends for students that demonstrate need
-Provide after school transportation to allow students to participate in remediation opportunities
-Develop summer school into a skills and adventure based experience in order to engage more student participation. (staffing, food, field trip entries and travel expenses, materials)
-Provide technology in order to bring 21st Century tech skills to students and increase student engagement (Hardware, software and teacher training)
-Use Maura Hart to facilitate development of a school restructuring plan
-Hire Home School Liaison to promote parent involvement and development parent involvement programming
-Stipend for teacher leadership team to attend the Roots to Roadmaps Conference at Castleton College in July 2010
-Provide funding to provide transportation and food for college/vocational school visits through VSAC
-Contract with CFES(College For Every Student) to connect middle school students to experiences that will enhance college awareness.
-Training and support for teacher teams to develop co-teaching model. To include training, consultation, food, substitutes, and stipends.

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Develop leadership team capacity to participate in classroom walk-throughs to enhance instruction and teacher effective practices. Training, support, materials, and substitutes.

Purchase of TESA software, hardware, annual fee and training for principal to provide frequent formative assessment feedback to teachers

Provide training and consultation to principal to improve teacher evaluation and feedback process. Include mentoring, materials, workshops, materials, webinars, and travel expenses.

REQUIREMENT 7

(7) The LEA must describe the goals it has established (subject to approval by the SEA) in order to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds.

TO MEET REQUIREMENT (7) ABOVE –

The LEA must describe the goals it has established (subject to approval by the SEA) in order to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds.

Directions: Describe indicators the LEA will use to assess progress towards implementation of the improvement plan for Tier III schools.

- Potential service providers for approved strategies will be contacted by the end of July in each year of the grant.
- Principals will document selection process of venders for services using district approved forms.
- Selected Service providers will be under contract by September 30 in each grant year.
- Delivery of services (number of days, dates, etc) by providers will be performed as specified in the contracts in place.
- Principals and service provers will document the provision of services including participant lists, meeting agendas, syllybi, copies of reports from service providers, and vendor records of staff contacts made and topics discussed.
- All supplies, software, and equipment not specific to professional development activities will have a purchase order in place by October 30 of each grant year.
- Principals will provide documentation of efforts made to obtain the best pricing for significant purchases of supplies, software, and equipment.
- Principals will assist central office personnel in the accounting and reporting of grant funds.

REQUIREMENT 8

(8) As appropriate, the LEA must consult with relevant stakeholders regarding the LEA's application and implementation of school improvement models in its Tier I and Tier II schools.

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TO MEET REQUIREMENT (8) ABOVE -

As appropriate, the LEA must consult with relevant stakeholders regarding the LEA's application and implementation of school improvement models in its Tier I and Tier II schools.

> **Directions:** *Please include evidence of stakeholder engagement as well as a plan for on-going stakeholder engagement. (e.g. board minutes, correspondence, newsletters, community meetings, etc)*

C. BUDGET: An LEA must include a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year in each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school it commits to serve.

The LEA must provide a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year to—

- Implement the selected model in each Tier I and Tier II school it commits to serve;
- Conduct LEA-level activities designed to support implementation of the selected school intervention models in the LEA's Tier I and Tier II schools; and
- Support school improvement activities, at the school or LEA level, for each Tier III school identified in the LEA's application.

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Directions: An LEA must include a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year in each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school it commits to serve. Attach budget.

See attached budgets. Westminsters is for one year only. The BFMS is a three year plan.

> Note: An LEA's budget must cover the period of availability, including any extension granted through a waiver, and be of sufficient size and scope to implement the selected school intervention model in each Tier I and Tier II school the LEA commits to serve.
>
> An LEA's budget for each year may not exceed the number of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools it commits to serve multiplied by $2,000,000.

D. ASSURANCES: An LEA must include the following assurances in its application for a School Improvement Grant.

The LEA must assure that it will—

(1) Use its School Improvement Grant to implement fully and effectively an intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school that the LEA commits to serve consistent with the final requirements;

(2) Establish annual goals for student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics and measure progress on the leading indicators in section III of the final requirements in order to monitor each Tier I and Tier II school that it serves with school improvement funds, and establish goals (approved by the SEA) to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds;

(3) If it implements a restart model in a Tier I or Tier II school, include in its contract or agreement terms and

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provisions to hold the charter operator, charter management organization, or education management organization accountable for complying with the final requirements; and

(4) Report to the SEA the school-level data required under section III of the final requirements.

These assurances and others are addressed in the Statement of Agreement. A copy of the State of Agreement signed by the Superintendent must be submitted with this application

E. WAIVERS: If the SEA has requested any waivers of requirements applicable to the LEA's School Improvement Grant, an LEA must indicate which of those waivers it intends to implement.

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Directions: The LEA must check each waiver that the LEA will implement. If the LEA does not intend to implement the waiver with respect to each applicable school, the LEA must indicate for which schools it will implement the waiver.

☐ Extending the period of availability of school improvement funds.

☐ "Starting over" in the school improvement timeline for Tier I and Tier II Title I participating schools implementing a turnaround or restart model.

☐ Implementing a school wide program in a Tier I or Tier II Title I participating school that does not meet the 40 percent poverty eligibility threshold.

Statement of Agreement

For Tier I/II schools:

Agreement to participate in a comprehensive assessment conducted by an external evaluator of the VTDOE's choosing to inform school improvement implementation plan development and VTDOE school improvement support team service plan development.

For Tier III schools:

For schools that have been in Corrective Action under the state accountability system for 4 years or more, this includes an agreement to participate in an assessment conducted by an external evaluator of the VTDOE's choosing

For Tier I/II/III schools:

o The application includes a commitment to work with the state School Improvement Support team in the development and execution of a school improvement implementation plan that assesses and incorporates effective school improvement strategies already under way and includes required (for Tier I and II) and permissible strategies

o The application includes a commitment to designate local leadership team (SU School Support team) responsible for directing and reporting on the progress of implementing defined elements. This team must include the superintendent, the principal of the school(s), the curriculum coordinator and the special education coordinator.

o The application includes a commitment to provide the following required data elements annually:

1.) Number of minutes within the school year
2.) Student participation rate on State assessments in reading/language arts and in mathematics, by student subgroup
3.) Dropout rate
4.) Student attendance rate
5.) Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (i.e. AP/IB), early college high schools, or dual enrollment classes
6.) Discipline incidents
7.) Truants
8.) Distribution of teachers by performance level on an LEA's teacher evaluation system (once that system is up and running)
9.) Teacher attendance rate

o The LEA agrees to collaborate and cooperate with state organized trainings for Supervisory Union administrators, principals, teachers and paraprofessionals, informational meetings, and trainings provided through the state.

o The LEA agrees to use an external evaluation and internal review process to identify any current practices or policies that are barriers to a full and effective implementation of the selected intervention and commit to eliminating barriers through the implementation process.

o The LEA agrees to use its School Improvement Grant to implement fully and effectively an intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school that the LEA commits to serve consistent with the final requirements;

o The LEA agrees to establish annual goals for student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics and measure progress on the leading indicators in section III of the final requirements in order to monitor each Tier I and Tier II school that it serves with school improvement funds, and establish goals (approved by the SEA) to hold accountable its Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds;

o If it implements a restart model in a Tier I or Tier II school, the LEA agrees to include in its contract or agreement terms and provisions to hold the charter operator, charter management organization, or education management organization accountable for complying with the final requirements; and

o The LEA agrees to report to the SEA the school-level data required under section III of the final requirements.

_____
Superintendent's Signature

Westminster School Improvement Grant

Areas of need	Strategy		SIG Amount Requested (FY 11)		SU Funding
Literacy	Purchase level books for each grade level at Westminster Schools.		$20,000		
	Purchase Professional Development materials to support reading interventions,differentiation and inculsion at the Westminster Schools.		$2,500		
	Data facilitator to assist school based teams in using data to plan instruction in literacy at the Westminster Schools.		$6,000		
	PLC meetings at the Westminster Schools to support teachers implementing new WNESU curriculum, to include facilitator, substitute, materials and food.		$1,500		$1,500
	Lexia Reading computer softwared to support students development of phoneme awareness, phonics, and		$5,000		
	Hire Reading Coach to assist teachers in making effective interventions to struggling readers.				80,000
Sub total			$35,000		
Math					
	Symphony Math computar software to support student development of math computation skills.		$2,500		
	MathRrecovery training for a Westminster Schools staff member to bring intervention strategy to the Westminster Schools. To include,registration, travel expenses, lodging, materials and substitutes.		$7,500		
	Westminster Schools staff will work with Mahesh Sharma to develop effective math instruction,implementing new WNESU curriculum, provide feedback to teachers, and developing formative math assessments		$10,000		
	Purchase math materials for lending library for students to use at home.		$1,000		
	Provide AIMSweb subscription in order to support data-driven instruction in mathematics.				$2,500
Sub total			$21,000		

School Climate

	Responsive Classroom training for an onsite teacher-leader who will serve as a staff development coach for Westminster Schools. To inlcude RC institutes, teacher stipend, travel, lodging, food, materials and cosultant follow-up.	$3,000	$3,500
	Develop the Student Social Action Committee to support student social learning, run no-blame meetings and develop in-school resources for a healthy school climate. To include on-site training from the Child Today (Center for Social Inclusion), Kim John Payne, substitutes, materials and food.	$10,000	
	Stipend for teacher leadership team to attend the Roots to Roadmaps Conference at Castleton College in July 2010 to work	$1,500	
Sub total		**$14,500**	

Graduation Rate

	Preschool Partner agreements to support quality preschool opportunity for 3 and 4 year olds	$10,000	
	Contract with FCES to connect elementary students to experiences that will enhance college awareness.	$25,000	
Sub total		**$35,000**	

Special Education

	Training and support for teacher teams to develop co-teaching model at each grade level. To include training, consultation, food, substitutes, and stipends.	$5,000	
Subtotal		**$5,000**	

Supervision of teachers

	Develop leadership team capacity to participate in classroom walk-throughs to enhance instruction and teacher effective practices. Training, support, materials, and substitutes.	$3,000	
	Provide training and consultation to Westminster Schools principal to improve teacher evaluation and feedback process. Include mentoring, materials, workshops, materials, webinars, and travel expenses.	$10,000	
Subtotal		**$13,000**	

| Total | $123,500 | $87,500 |

Westminster Schools
School Improvement Grant

- A clear analysis of your recent and relevant longitudinal data regarding student learning, culture, and areas for school improvement (as identified in the Grant Application).
  - o NECAP result analysis - 2010
  - o 2010 Progress Monitoring Reports by grade level
  - o DOE Focus Monitoring Report – 2010
  - o Consultant Reports 2010
    - ▪ Amanda Arens – Literacy
    - ▪ Cyrene Wells – Writing
    - ▪ Paula Denton- School Climate via Responsive Classroom
- Identified needs and priorities based on that data analysis
  - o Attached action plan for Westminster Schools.
    - ▪ Additional attention to strategies to:
      - • implement new WNESU Curricula
      - • increase graduation rate
      - • decrease dropout
      - • increase early intervention
- Desired and achievable outcomes for needs and priorities
  - o See action plan focus areas
    - ▪ Improved academic outcomes for reading, writing and math
    - ▪ Social Emotional Development - Decrease discipline referrals
  - o Increase graduation rate
- Strategies to address those outcomes
  - o Implement curricula in math and literacy language arts
    - ▪ Work with consultants
      - • Math- Mahesh Sharma
        - o Effective instruction with fidelity
        - o Develop formative assessments
        - o Principal Walk-throughs
      - • Literacy- Amanda Arens and Cyrene Wells
        - o Effective instruction using balanced literacy
          - ▪ Word work-phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary
          - ▪ Guided reading- fluency, comprehension strategies
          - ▪ Writing Workshop
  - o Develop grade level formative assessments –
    - ▪ Use developed Item Bank and NECAP released items
  - o School climate
    - ▪ Responsive classroom
      - • Embedded coaches
      - • In school consulting (demonstration and debriefing)
      - • Assessment of fidelity and integrity
        - ▪ Social Inclusion

- Student Social Action Committee
  - Social Action Committee (community)
    - Bully Prevention Training
- Timeline for reaching outcomes
  o Work with consultants for planning instruction – Spring/Summer 2010
  o Plan implementation new curricula in Spring 2010
  o Develop Formative assessments – Summer/ Fall 2010 and ongoing
    - Use Item Bank and NECAP Common Released Items in reading and math
    - Participate in PNOA training in June 2010
  o School Leadership team attend Roadmap to Success workshop – July 2010
  o Teacher leaders attend Schoolwide Responsive classroom Institute
    - Staff attend additional training in RC Institutes -
  o Progress monitor students – ongoing
  o Report to parents using new curriculum based report card beginning Fall 2010
    - Mid-term
    - End of semester
- Measures of success and /or assessment strategies for the outcomes
  o Progress monitoring- Aimsweb CBMs
  o Tracking office referrals/bully reports
  o Graduation rate increased
- Cost of strategies including SIG funding and other sources of funding to be used.
  o See attached budget
  o Additional funding provided via CFP grants and local budget

#	Not evident	Emerging	Area of strength	Narrative
1			Principal has communicated a sense of urgency...	The principal and the school leadership team (consisting of representatives from the teaching staff) have developed shared vision that begins with children as learners and is focused on continual improvement. Professional Development is responsive to student performance and teacher needs. We have developed teams, supports, and protocols to move the school forward. We have developed strategies that include on-site opportunities, clinical training in classrooms, debriefing about effective instruction.
2		Continuous improvement system		The culture of the school is one of serving children, teachers as professionals, and collaboration. Teachers routinely engage in learning opportunities that improve instruction and develop ways to meet student learning needs. Currently, the school is moving from activity/project based to student achievement based criteria.
3		Curriculum		WNESU School Board approved a new mathematics Curriculum in March 2010 and a English Language Arts Curriculum in May 2010. They are aligned with state standards; however, we are now developing plans for implementation and assessment to ensure fidelity and integrity. Individual teachers do not have the option to disregard or replace agreed upon content. Teachers work on grade level teams – including special education teachers – to modify academic instruction to meet needs of all students.
4		Scheduling		The schedule permits common planning time. Grade level teams have numerous times each week to meet including the use of data in planning instruction, looking at formative assessment, and participating in educational support team meetings on each student. All teachers have targets in reading, writing and math that challenge all students to learn. We use Critical Friends Group protocols as well as Professional Learning Community structure for our meetings.
5			Common formative assessments – student data reviewed	We began using a RtI model this year. We use Aimsweb to progress monitor all students (we use PAP, DRA2, District Math Assessment, Gates Reading and NECAP to collect data). We meet weekly in grade level teaching teams (including special education teachers) to discuss student outcomes and plan instruction. We will be looking at using Item Bank questions, NECAP released items, and developing "Problem of the Week" structures connected to new curricula in order to assess gaps and learning. We are also beginning to use Learning Intentions as a means of setting purpose and stating what is being learned in an explicit way.

#	Category	Description
6	School data teams	We implemented a Response to Intervention model this year with the assistance of Rich Reid and Janet Larsen financed by the BEST grant. Next steps will be to incorporate our RtI and EST processes to serve all students, to ensure we personalize learning, and set progress monitoring targets that enhance learning and communication with parents. We will be working to use our data system more readily – through data entry in Powerschool and Data Warehouse.
7	Professional Development is delivered in schools and classrooms by experts among the staff or outside consultants.	We work with consultants in areas of reading, writing and math – and have on staff a locally funded math coach as well as an ARRA funded reading coach. The math coach will be working to expand her knowledge of math assessments and interventions this summer- and the reading coach continues to use his experience to offer support in classrooms and with assessment data. We are planning on developing Responsive Classroom coaches on staff to support the use of embedded PD. Currently, we have an hour every Wednesday morning for Critical Friends Group/Staff Seminar. We are looking to develop structures to support teachers visiting each others' rooms.
8	Teacher evaluation system	WNESU uses a cycle structure of observation and project based professional evaluation/supervision. We use a modified Danielson Framework to identify areas of need and strengths. Teachers are observed and feedback given on cycle one. They work collaboratively on "teacher research" on cycle two and three. Student achievement is not part of teacher evaluation.
9	Para-professionals	All paraprofessionals meet HQ standards. Some are certified teachers. All participate in professional development opportunities within the school – Responsive Classroom, Critical Friends Groups, etc.
10	Special Education and Student Support System	Students receive services in the regular education classroom the majority of the time (more than 80%) with teachers beginning to co-teach. Training in fine-tuning our teaching teams will be next steps. Our IEPs are written to use student data to progress monitor goals. All students are expected to show progress – and instruction is planned to offer appropriate challenges. We are still working to develop differentiated learning plans effectively. This year we began reporting to parents more regularly and systematically – using a trimester system – with midterm and end of term reports. We will be combining EST and RtI structures to more regularly use data on all students in planning instruction.
11	Resources are equitably distributed	We are developing use of technology for all children in the classroom through the building of notebooks/netbooks carts that can be used throughout the schools. Technology is funded through local budgets, grants, and special education. Special education teachers will be developing baseline skills in the fall of 2010 through a workshop with a consultant.

12		Social Emotional support systems	The Westminster Schools implemented Responsive Classroom schoolwide in 2008 (see fidelity report from Paula Denton, consultant) to address our climate. The next steps will include attending the schoolwide RC conference this summer, working to develop a "coach" within our school, who will offer teachers embedded professional development, support and learning facilitation. Using FBA tools and interventions will be important to reduce distractions and time off task.
13	Schools develop career and college readiness		We have not made this a priority for our community. Working to connect children to college – setting hopes and dreams, sharing stories, and visiting colleges in the next year will become part of our plan. One grant strategy will address this need directly.
14		Preschool, after-school and summer school programs are available to all.	We were awarded a 21st century grant beginning July 1, 2010. We offer tutoring, homework support, and extended day structures. Our programs have previously been funded through private grants, local funding, CFG and subsidy.
15		Community and business partnerships	We are working to enhance our partnerships – beyond pre-school opportunities. We bring high school students in to mentor, senior citizens to read, and are working to develop a schoolwide PTO. We survey parents and community yearly to look for opportunities to improve our performance.

See attached Survey.

ATTACHMENT E – Initial School Capacity Self Assessment

As adapted from A Theory of Action (Richardson, 2009)

School Name: Westminster Schools

Superintendent (name): Christopher Kibbe for Johanna Harges

Superintendent (signature): _Chris Kibbe for Johanna Thompson_ Date: 6/7/10

Factors for Assessing School Capacity to Improve/Actions to Take	Not Evident	Emerging	Strong
The Principal has communicated urgency, vision, and a plan			
The Principal is recognized as the instructional leader.			
All staff know how a continuous improvement system works.			
The curriculum is aligned and focused across and within grades.			
The curriculum is aligned with state standards.			
The curriculum reflects rigor.			
All students are expected to master the curriculum.			
The school has a data team that meets to review student outcomes and a computerized student data tracking system.			
All teachers review their student data regularly.			
Common formative assessments have been developed for each grade across all grades in the school and are tracked by the student data system.			
The schedule permits common planning time and is focused on academic improvement and social support.			
There is a warm and welcoming climate with firm expectations for acceptable behavior.			
Paraprofessionals have passed proficiency requirements.			
Professional development is provided in classrooms and is focused on school areas of need identified by the accountability system.			
The Principal is frequently in classrooms and the teacher evaluation system is effective in improving teaching and learning.			
Teachers reflect the climate of open communication by visiting one another's classes and sharing lessons and other materials.			
The special education and support systems are provided in regular classrooms, are based on the response to intervention system, and connected to the formative assessment system.			
Resources are equitably distributed across classes and support systems			

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Social and emotional support systems are adequate for the student needs.			
There are preschool, after school, and summer programs for all students.			
There is evidence of business and community support.			
Career and college readiness programs begin in middle school and offer pathways to college, internships, and supports in high school.			

PAGE: FACTORS OF ASSESSING SCHOOL CAPACITY TO IMPROVE/ACTIONS TO TAKE

1. In which school are you currently working

	Response Percent	Response Count
Bellows Falls Middle School	60.0%	36
Westminster Schools	40.0%	24
answered question		60
skipped question		0

2. What is your current position in your school?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Classroom Teacher	33.3%	20
Special Subject Teacher	10.0%	6
Special Educator	11.7%	7
Para Educator	18.3%	11
Administrator	6.7%	4
Other (please specify)	20.0%	12
answered question		60
skipped question		0

Show replies

3. How long have you been working in your school?

	Response Percent	Response Count
1 year	21.7%	13
2-4 years	30.0%	18
5-8 years	15.0%	9

	Response Percent	Response Count
8-12 years	11.7%	7
More than 12 years	21.7%	13
answered question		60
skipped question		0

PAGE: FACTORS FOR ASSESSING SCHOOL CAPACITY TO IMPROVE/ACTIONS TO TAKE

4. The Principal has communicated urgency, vision and a plan.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Evident	13.2%	7
Emerging	39.6%	21
Strong	47.2%	25
answered question		53
skipped question		7

5. The Principal is recognized as the instructional leader.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Evident	24.5%	13
Emerging	26.4%	14
Strong	49.1%	26
answered question		53
skipped question		7

6. All staff know how a continuous improvement system works.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Evident	17.3%	9

	Response Percent	Response Count
Emerging	65.4%	34
Strong	17.3%	9
answered question		52
skipped question		8

PAGE: FACTORS FOR ASSESSING SCHOOL CAPACITY, CONTINUED

7. The curriculum is aligned and focused across and within grades.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Evident	3.8%	2
Emerging	73.6%	39
Strong	28.3%	15
answered question		53
skipped question		7

8. The curriculum is aligned with state standards.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Evident	1.9%	1
Emerging	50.9%	27
Strong	50.9%	27
answered question		53
skipped question		7

9. The curriculum reflects rigor.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Evident	9.4%	5
Emerging	54.7%	29

	Response Percent	Response Count
Strong	41.5%	22
answered question		53
skipped question		7

PAGE: FACTORS FOR ASSESSING SCHOOL CAPACITY, CONTINUED

10. All students are expected to master the curriculum.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Evident	20.8%	11
Emerging	56.6%	30
Strong	24.5%	13
answered question		53
skipped question		7

11. The School has a data team that meets to review student outcomes and a computerized student data tracking system

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Evident	7.8%	4
Emerging	47.1%	24
Strong	47.1%	24
answered question		51
skipped question		9

12. All teachers review their student data regularly.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	24.0%	12
Emerging	50.0%	25

	Response Percent	Response Count
Strong	26.0%	13
	50	

answered question 50
skipped question 10

13. Common formative assessments have been developed for each grade across all grades in the school and are tracked by the student data system.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	21.2%	11
Emerging	55.8%	29
Strong	23.1%	12

answered question 52
skipped question 8

PAGE: FACTORS FOR ASSESSING SCHOOL CAPACITY, CONTINUED

14. The schedule permits common planing time and is focused on academic improvement and social support.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	26.4%	14
Emerging	49.1%	26
Strong	24.5%	13

answered question 53
skipped question 7

15. There is a warm and welcoming climate with firm expectations for acceptable behavior.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	15.4%	8

	Response Percent	Response Count
Emerging	40.4%	21
Strong	44.2%	23
	answered question	52
	skipped question	8

16. Paraprofessionals have passed proficiency requirements.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	10.9%	5
Emerging	37.0%	17
Strong	52.2%	24
	answered question	46
	skipped question	14

17. Professional development is provided in classrooms and is focused on school areas of need identified by the accountability system.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	15.4%	8
Emerging	32.7%	17
Strong	51.9%	27
	answered question	52
	skipped question	8

PAGE: FACTORS FOR ASSESSING SCHOOL CAPACITY, CONTINUED

18. The Principal is frequently in classrooms and the teacher evaluation system is effective in improving teaching and learning.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	47.1%	24

	Response Percent	Response Count
Emerging	47.1%	24
Strong	5.9%	3
answered question		51
skipped question		9

19. Teachers reflect the climate of open communication by visiting one another's classes and sharing lessons and other materials.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	42.0%	21
Emerging	42.0%	21
Strong	16.0%	8
answered question		50
skipped question		10

20. The special education and support systems are provided in regular classrooms, are based on the response to intervention system, and connected to the formative assessment system.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	22.0%	11
Emerging	48.0%	24
Strong	30.0%	15
answered question		50
skipped question		10

21. Resources are equally distributed across classes and support systems.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	31.3%	15

	Response Percent	Response Count
Emerging	31.3%	15
Strong	37.5%	18
answered question		48
skipped question		12

PAGE: FACTORS FOR ASSESSING SCHOOL CAPACITY, CONTINUED

22. Social and emotional support systems are adequate for the student needs.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	5.8%	3
Emerging	67.3%	35
Strong	26.9%	14
answered question		52
skipped question		8

23. There are preschool, after school, and summer programs for all students.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	5.8%	3
Emerging	30.8%	16
Strong	63.5%	33
answered question		52
skipped question		8

24. There is evidence of business and community support.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	9.6%	5
Emerging	55.8%	29

Strong		34.6%	18

| | answered question | 52 |
| | skipped question | 8 |

25. Career and college readiness programs begin in middle school and offer pathways to college, internships, and supports in high school.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Not evident	16.0%	8
Emerging	26.0%	13
Strong	12.0%	6
Not Applicable	46.0%	23
	answered question	50
	skipped question	10

Westminster Schoolwide Action Plan

Focus Areas, Goals, Targets and Needs

Focus Area 1: Student academic performance will improve in reading, writing and mathematics.

1. **Goal One:** 90% of children will read at grade level by the end of 2011-12 school year as measured by the DRA2.
   a. **Target:** A comprehensive core reading curriculum will be used school wide by June 2011.
   b. **Need:** Currently, student performance is inconsistent on a variety of assessments (NECAP, DRA2, and other classroom based assessments) leading us to question how we teach reading and if we are meeting the academic needs of all our students.

2. **Goal Two:** 90% of our fifth grade students will meet or exceed the state average in writing as measured by the NECAP in the fall of each year.
   a. **Target:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in writing through a collection of pieces scored with a rubric as part of a local assessment.
   b. **Need:** Currently, student writing does not meet the expectations for proficient writers. The average writing scores of our school has consistently been well below the state average on state assessments. Our students have not used writing effectively to describe their critical thinking in content areas (constructed response), when response to literature, or in writing to a prompt.

3. **Goal Three:** 90% of students will demonstrate computational fluency by the end of fourth grade.
   a. **Target:** A local math curriculum will be used school wide by June (**September**) 2010.
   b. **Need:** Currently, student performance is inconsistent on a variety of assessments (NECAP, local computational and problem solving assessments) leading us to question mathematics instruction.

4. **Goal Four:** Expand access to high quality early education to ensure children's readiness for school.
   a. **Target:** 80% of Westminster's three and four years olds will attend ten hours (or more) a week of high quality preschool.
   b. **Need:** Many Westminster children currently access pre-school programs that do not meet the quality standards under Act 62.

Focus Area 2: Improve School Climate

1. **Goal 1:** Build and sustain a safe, positive, healthy school climate where all children, family, staff, and community members are welcomed and supported.
   a. **Target:** Children and adults will interact in respectful ways.
   b. **Need:** Disruptions to classroom learning, opportunities for student leadership and personalized instruction, consistent implementation of the Responsive Classroom practices, and playground safety impact the learning of all children.

2. **Goal 2:** Support students in developing self-control, positive respectful peer interactions.
   a. **Target:** Self-control and awareness of others is essential for a more vibrant and successful learning community.
   b. **Need:** Students become self-directed and autonomous learners, as well as, school and community leaders.

3. **Goal 3:** A professional learning community with a shared vision, where collaborative teams are valued and there is an explicit commitment to academic achievement for all learners.
   a. **Target:** Support for teachers in using data from a variety of assessments and the examination of student work to drive instruction.
   b. **Need:** Assessment tools and analysis of learning will allow teachers to address needs of all learners. Academic achievement is often secondary to other developmental needs.

4. **Goal 4:** Develop a plan for and establish school-wide healthy life choices.
   a. **Target:** Support Chef Manager, students, and teachers in providing healthy choice opportunities
   b. **Need:** Add value to the school meal program, continue offering community physical enjoyment.

Focus Area 3: Integration of school, families and community in the support of the children of Westminster.

1. **Goal 1:** Collaborative partnering relationships will be established to improve teaching and learning.
   a. **Target:** Parents will know about school activities and be involved in planning/implementation of educational activities.
   b. **Need: Improved home/school communication and participation of families.**
2. **Goal 2:** The Staff will work with community to expand use of school facility.
   a. **Target:** Community will access and utilize the school facility for various activities.
   b. **Need:** Westminster Schools has just expanded the facility and communicating availability is a priority.

Westminster Schools

2009 NECAP Results

The NECAP Test assesses students yearly in reading and mathematics in grades 3-8. The chart below follows the percentage of students who are proficient or above at each grade level. Cohorts of students progress up one grade per year. To follow a cohort, read down and to the right.

Reading

Teaching Year Grade	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Second	58%	58%	64%	53%	58%
Third	52%	55%	53%	57%	58%
Fourth	65%	54%	61%	54%	70%
Fifth	35%	69%	68%	69%	75%
Sixth	50%	42%	72%	60%	71%

Mathematics

Teaching Year Grade	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Second	58%	61%	60%	52%	56%
Third	56%	69%	50%	57%	54%
Fourth	71%	58%	72%	50%	70%
Fifth	71%	60%	59%	72%	61%
Sixth	48%	61%	66%	40%	71%

Responsive Classroom® Consultant's Report to Client

Client: Steven Tullar, Principal
Westminster Schools, Westminter, VT

Consultant: Paula Denton, Director of Program Development and Delivery
Northeast Foundation for Children/*Responsive Classroom*
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Purpose

Steven Tullar, principal at the Westminster Center School in Westminster, VT requested my services as a *Responsive Classroom* consultant to advise him and his staff on ways in which they might respond productively to a sudden increase in student misbehavior and resultant office referrals. I spent one day in the school observing in classrooms and other areas such as the cafeteria and school playground. I also spoke with several teachers and other school staff to gain their perspectives on this problem. The purpose of this report is to summarize my findings and make suggestions about a variety of ways in which the school staff might begin to address the apparent increase in student misbehavior.

General Overview

Westminster Center School, in southern Vermont, is a rural elementary school for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The current population of less than 200 students has been shrinking over the past few years. The atmosphere of the school is strikingly welcoming and warm. Written greetings meet students and families at each of the two main entrances. Parents and grandparents may be seen comfortably mingling with students, school staff, and each other at the beginning and end of the school day exchanging greetings and news. Both students and teachers greet visitors warmly. Long time teachers at Westminster talk of teaching the parents and older siblings of current students. Student work is prominently and respectfully displayed in both public areas and classrooms. Clearly, the sense of community here is strong.

Westminster Center School staff have demonstrated a commitment to using the *Responsive Classroom* approach to building a strong social, emotional, and academic school climate. Both teachers and support staff have participated in training and related book studies over the past three years. Evidence of this work may be seen throughout the school. In general the staff seem to be very hard working and positive, respectful to students and each other, and eager to continually improve their practice. They meet once a month after school in "Critical Friends" groups to reflect on *Responsive Classroom* practices together.

Currently both the faculty and the students are dealing with an unusually high level of stress due to two issues. These issues are (1) the need to raise test scores, and (2) upcoming reductions in the teaching staff and changes to classroom configurations.

Despite the obvious hard work and dedication of the staff, Westminster Center School has not met the state's AYP (annual yearly progress) goals for students for the past two years in a row. Currently, teachers are spending a great deal of time on efforts to improve student test scores and meet AYP. Teachers participate regularly in professional learning communities examining testing data and planning instruction to meet student needs. They are incorporating the framework and strategies of Response to Intervention (RTI) to assist with monitoring and analyzing student academic progress and they have recently adopted some new curricula all with the goal of improving learning and test scores. Teachers report that they can see progress due to these efforts and also that they are feeling the pressures of being identified as

"underperforming" and of the time and energy required to learn new curricula and protocols in addition to the usual work and stresses of teaching.

Because of the shrinking student population, Westminster Center School will be reducing their teaching staff by three teachers next year. Longstanding locations and grade level configuration of classrooms will also be changing – this in a community where parents of current students still expect their children to have the same teachers and experiences in the same locations that they did at the school. The upcoming change will also mean that the options of placing their children in either multi-age or looping classroom situations will be lost. Children and parents who counted on having the same teacher for two years will no longer be able to count on this. The news of this change was shared at an open forum with parents just before the new year and it seems that many are feeling uncomfortable and anxious about this change. Some teachers are reporting that many children seem to have returned to school after the new year reflecting this uncertainty and anxiety in their parents.

Problem Statement
Since the beginning of January, Steven Tullar, the principal of Westminster Center school has noted a significant increase in the number of students being sent to the office for disciplinary reasons. The general expectation is that students will only be sent to the office for either violent behavior or defiance toward a teacher. The majority of the students sent to the office for behavior recently however, seem to be there as a result of repeated incidences of lower level misbehaviors that are not changing with the use of the usual classroom discipline measures such as time out. This seems to reflect both a change in the amount of misbehavior that is occurring and a rise in the frustration levels of teachers as to how to respond effectively to the misbehaviors.

Teachers' Reports
I met with several classroom teachers in order to learn more about their perceptions of the problem. The teachers consistently described a sense of frustration and discouragement with what seem to be increasingly high rates of misbehavior in their classrooms. These misbehaviors included:

- interrupting the teacher and each other
- being off task and/or not following directions
- refusing to do assigned work
- resisting teachers' encouragement to complete assigned work with communications such as "I don't care."
- not listening in class
- not taking turns with classmates
- making disruptive noises such as purposeful burping during instructional sessions
- ignoring rules and well established procedures (such as leaving the classroom without permission)

In addition to describing problem behaviors, teachers reported that they were noticing an apparent increase in children's general anxiety levels. A greater number of children than usual seem quick to give up on challenging tasks and to express anger, frustration, or anxiety.

While classroom teachers expressed frustration with these behaviors in their own classrooms, they also pointed out that essentialist teachers (such as art and music teachers) were dealing with even higher rates of misbehavior than they were. Recess time was also named as a time when a great deal of the misbehaviors seem to be generated or exacerbated and teachers find it difficult to take the time needed to respond to upset children during and after recess. At recess, the children most likely to experience difficulties are assigned to play in a group closely supervised by the P.E. teacher who also oversees recess. During the first to fourth grade recess, at lease two other adults are also present in the play area to supervise the 90 children who have recess at the same time each day.

Jon, the guidance counselor reported that he has coordinated bi-monthly All-School meetings for several years now. The purpose of these meetings is to share in school-wide activities that promote and celebrate a sense of community in the school. These meetings are traditionally planned by the art and music teachers along with other teacher volunteers and in past years were very successful. Jon reports that this year, teachers have felt too overwhelmed with all the time needed to implement strategies intended to

raise student test scores to take the time needed to plan all-school meetings that meet the level of past years.

In addition to sharing their concerns, teachers asked the following questions:

- What do you do when time out doesn't work? or, what do you do when you use time out and the child does not stop the misbehavior?

- How do you teach children to self-monitor and not be so dependent on the teacher's surveillance and direction?

- How do we find time to work constructively with children who are in "meltdown" or chronic misbehavior patterns during our packed schedules and curricular pressures?

- How do we improve behaviors at recess?

- Are there other helpful responses to misbehavior besides time out or "you break it, you fix it?"

- How do I respond in the moment a misbehavior is occuring?

Observations

I observed for at least a few moments in each classroom and for periods of up to 20 minutes in some classrooms. I also observed the first to fourth grade recess and lunch, hallway behaviors and some of the school dismissal time.

Over all, I was struck by the very kind and respectful quality of the interactions I saw among adults and children in the school. The children seemed comfortable and friendly and for much of the time, most were highly engaged and focused on the work at hand. This was especially true when I observed children working in small groups with an adult leading each group or when children were working with concrete classroom materials.

Student work was beautifully displayed in classrooms and throughout the school as were rules and student "hopes and dreams" for their year. I saw time out used in a highly appropriate manner several times in several classrooms and I heard a lot of well articulated "reminding language" as well as a lesser (but notable) amount of skillful "reinforcing language. I saw teachers using modeling to teach expected use of materials and saw parts of Morning Meetings such as sharing and morning messages.

In the cafeteria, students were calm, friendly and well behaved. The use of smaller round table, assigned seats, clear, well established routines, and most important, having adults eating lunch with the children is clearly working very well.

I also was able to observe some of the problem behaviors reported by teachers:

- I saw times when children or teachers were speaking to the class while several students were walking around the classroom, talking to one another, distracted with various items (opening a snack box, thumbing through a book, playing with a pencil, etc.), or simply sitting with his or her back turned to the speaker.

- I saw teachers ask for attention then wait for long stretches while children continued to wander, talk, or focus on things other than the teacher.

- I saw long, inefficient transitions with teachers focused on problem-solving with individual children.

- I saw whole group instructional sessions in which some students were clearly not participating and some were actively resistant to teacher direction.

- I saw a very chaotic recess.

Conclusions

Westminster Center School has many strengths, the most important of which is its dedicated, hard working, and very caring staff. The sense of community here is palpable and the students clearly feel safe and welcome over all. There is much to appreciate and admire about the teachers and children of Westminster Center School!

Currently all the members of this school community are also experiencing a greater than usual amount of stress due to several factors. The upcoming changes in the staffing and organization of the school are clearly producing anxiety for at least some. In addition, the changes and increased time commitments toward new protocols for raising student test scores must lead to greater pressures on both teachers and students. In a time of such change and stress, it is no wonder that the children are less focused and resilient and it is no wonder that teachers are feeling short on time and long on frustration. To counter these forces, it will be important to simplify and routinize chdren's schedules and activities as much as possible. Teachers can also provide children extra structure and support during this time.

Suggestions

In order to reduce the amount of misbehavior among children and the frustration among teachers at this time as well as to help teachers answer their questions as shared above, I suggest the following:

- Within the adult community, acknowledge the pressures all are working under and the effects these pressures can have. Think together of ways to support each other to stay positive and remember all the strengths and benefits they are bringing to their students and the community in general. Find ways to celebrate, play, and laugh together even when you feel you have no time for it!

- Make time to discuss the changes taking place in the school with the children - in small groups or by class groupings. Share information briefly using simple,straightforward language and acknowledge that it's normal to feel worried about how changes will affect them. Give the children a chance to share their worries and questions with a trusted teacher or other adult. Reassure them that the adults have a good plan and will take good care of them.

- Keep the school routines and schedules as highly predictable and ritualized as possible. Reduce the number of transitions children must make and have them work in their own classrooms and stay with their own classmates as much as possible. The lunch time routines currently in place are a great example of this.

  This could mean finding ways to bring the essentialist teachers to the regular classroom rather than moving the students to the essentialists' classrooms for a while at least until things feel calmer.

- Having student teachers in a school and classroom can be wonderful in many ways, but during times of rapid change and stress the need to adjust to a different teacher, especially an inexperienced one, can increase student anxiety and thus their misbehavior. If possible, find ways to reduce the amount of time student teachers are in charge of the classroom and make sure the regular classroom teacher remains with the class to support individual students and coach the student teacher much more than may be the usual case. I suggest that you consider a moratorium on taking student teachers at least for next fall when the new classroom configurations will be in place.

- Rehearse/review expecations for behavior during transitions or independent work times BEFORE initiating the transition/work time, EVERY TIME. Using interactive modeling generously, as needed, and reminding language to help children mentally and physically rehearse before taking action. During times of stress children may need this support 100% of the time for awhile.

- When children are moving through transitions, hallways, dismissal activities, or engaging in independent activities, STAND BACK AND OBSERVE them. Coach them with reinforcing, reminding and redirecting language -- be generous with reinforcing! Do not engage with individual students, other teachers, or anything that distracts you from observing and coaching the children. Your primary job is to keep them behaving positively. It is not reasonable to expect children to self-monitor without the steady support and guidance of adults, especially in times of change.

- Respond to misbehavior quickly, calmly, and firmly. Caring firmness and consistency is essential. Do not let ANY misbehavior go without stopping it as soon as you see it. For more strategies on ways to respectfully stop misbehavior in the moment, a specially designed workshop with an NEFC consultant may be arranged. This workshop may be one or two hours long or last an entire day.

- Avoid putting children in situations where they must multi-task. For example, do not combine sharing time with snack time, or read-aloud with art or other quiet time activities. In time pressured situations it is tempting to do this, but the children need less input and stimulation at once, not more, when they are dealing with stress and anxiety.

- Find ways to name and celebrate your wonderful community and the successes that are happening every day. Do this within classroom groups rather than in large groups. For example -
  - Closing circles
  - Spontaneous outside or inside game or even a quick run around the school

- Avoid having the children sit for too long. For example, after morning meeting, do not go directly to another activity (such as read aloud) that requires that children remain in the same seating arrangement.

- Do not skip group activities in morning meeting. For the 5 minutes of time spent here you will gain much more learning time during the rest of the day.

- Use Energizers to give brain and body breaks at regular intervals, especially during new and/or challenging lessons. Children need to move at least every 20 minutes. Anxious children may need to move more frequently than that.

- Recess needs to be a much more predictable, safe, and calm time for the children. Even if many classes must go to recess at the same time, have them remain with their regular classes or preassign them to groups (as you do for lunch). Play structured games or do highly predictable structured activities with each group. Avoid situations where the children most likely to need behavior support are all with one adult.

- Release classes to recess one at a time so they don't all pass through the halls and on to the playground at once. This is chaotic and very anxiety inducing for children who are already on edge. When it's time to go back in to the school have groups line up in separate lines and go in one line at a time - each line with an adult supervising.

Suggestions for possible follow-up support with a NEFC Consultant
NEFC Consulting teachers are available to provide follow-up support in a number of ways:

- Demonstration lessons -a consultant can teach a lesson in a designated classroom with structured guidelines for participant teachers' observation and reflection including RC practices such as incorporating academic instruction into Morning Meetings, using academic choice to teach a math lesson, using interactive modeling and coaching for efficient transitions, etc.

- Problem-solving sessions - the consutant can work with small groups of teachers to explore one or more (depending on time) common behavior problems and possible ways to respond. This would provide a set of situationally specific strategies that teachers could then try out in their own teaching situations.

- Refresher mini workshops - the consultant could explore a topic such as logical consequences in more depth with a staff or teacher team. This would provide more general concepts and strategies that teachers would then need to adapt and apply to their own specific situations as they put the ideas into practice in their classrooms.

- Mini workshops - the consultant could present one to two hour sessions on selected topics such as closing circles for a positive end of the day, learning and effectively using energizers, cooperative playground games, creating classroom and schoolwide rituals and celebrations, etc.

- Individual observation and coaching - the consultant could observe predetermined lessons or other class activities (math lessons, transitions, writing time, morning meetings, etc.) and provide feedback and coaching for a teacher in areas of the teacher's choosing.

School Name: Westminster Schools (PS334)
SU: Windham Northeast SU

This data is referenced under item 1 on page 13 of the SIG application

	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Graduation Rate (if elementary school, list rate for the high school in the SU)	63.92%	72.73%	School to provide this data for current year
Drop-out Rate (if elementary school, list rate for the high school in the SU)	5.11%	7.01%	School to provide this data for current year
Discipline Referrals	43	16	School provides data for this column for current year (new CIRS data not due until 7-15-10)
School Action Plan priorities	School supplies this data		
Highly Qualified Teacher data	Data housed at school/SU *Attached*		
Child count by disability category:			
Developmental Delay	3	8	9
Learning Impairment	1	0	0
Specific Learning Disability	12	11	10
Visual Impairment	0	0	0
Deafness/Hard of Hearing	0	0	0
Speech or Language Impairment	3	2	4
Orthopedic Impairment	0	0	0
Other Health Impairment	6	2	3
Emotional Disturbance	6	4	3
Autism Spectrum Disorder	2	1	2
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0	0
Deaf-Blindness	0	0	0
Multiple Disabilities	0	0	0

a) Inclusion of the following data and summarization of conclusions reached after assessing the data:

Area	Westminster Schools (as of June 1, 2010)
Graduation rates	NA
Drop-out rates	NA
Discipline referrals	161 (office referrals)
School action plan priorities	attached
Highly qualified teacher data	attached
Child count by disability category	attached
Percent of students with disabilities in the general education classroom more than 80% of the time	99%
Number of out of district placements	0
Number of students in "alternative" day placements	0
Number of ELL students	2
Number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch	116
Most recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey	see attached

		Licensure Levels*				College Degree		Highly Qualified Status		
SCHOOL	TOTAL	% LEVEL I	% LEVEL II	% LEVEL I & II	% PROVISIONAL	% Bachelors	% Masters	%HQT		
BF MIDDLE SCHOOL	31	3%	77%	3%	19%	52.00%	48.00%	100%		
WESTMINSTER SCHOOLS	28	25%	71%	4%	4%	36.00%	64.00%	100%		

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS REPORT   June 11, 2010

* Licensure Levels may not add up to 100% because teachers may possess multiple licenses.

Bellows Falls Middle School Improvement Grant June 11, 2010

Areas of need	Strategy	Amount Requested from SIG			SU Funding		
		F11	F12	F13	F11	F12	F13
Literacy							
	Purchase Professional Development materials to support reading interventions,differentiation and	$2,500					
	Provide certified teachers to work with students not proficient in afterschool program	$10,000	$10,000				
	Data facilitator to assist school based teams in using data to plan instruction in literacy	$6,000					
	PLC meetings to support teachers implementing new WNESU curriculum, to include facilitator, substitute,	$3,000				$3,000	$3,000
	Provide stipend for lead teacher to coordinate professional development and oversee fidelity to	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000			
	Lexia Reading computer software to support reading development	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000			
	Provide training to teachers on writing supports of Collins and Kansas	$4,000					
Sub total		**$32,500**	**$17,000**	**$7,000**		**$3,000**	**$3,000**
Math							
	Symphony Math (to grade 4 skills) computar software to support student development of math computation	$2,100	$2,100	$2,100			
	Buy math games as recommended by Mahesh Sharma, math consultant, to develop numeracy	$5,000					
	Provide certified teachers to work with students not proficient in afterschool program	$10,000	$10,000				
	MathRrecovery training for a staff member to implement this intervention strategy . To include,registration, travel expenses, lodging,	$7,500					
	Purchase Study Island math (Grades 5-8) support program to develop computational math skills	$6,000					
	Staff will work with Mahesh Sharma to develop effective math instruction,implementing new WNESU curriculum, provide feedback to teachers, and developing formative math assessments	$10,000					
	Provide stipend for lead teacher to coordinate professional development and oversee fidelity to	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000			
	Purchase math books and supplemental teacher materials for students in grades 5/6	$12,000					
	Purchase additional math books for students in grades 7/8 to allow books to be taken home	$5,000					
	Purchase math materials for lending library for students to use at home.	$1,000					

	Provide AIMSweb subscription in order to support data-driven instruction in mathematics.						$2,500	$2,500	$2,500
Sub total		**$60,600**	**$14,100**	**$4,100**		**$2,500**	**$2,500**	**$2,500**

School Climate and Structure

	Provide anti bully and harassment programming	$4,000	$2,000	$1,000				
	Provide stipend and training expenses for an advisor for Junior National Honor Society in order to create positive leadership experiences and recognition for	$7,000	$2,000	$2,000				
	Provide stipend and training expenses for an advisor for Peer Mediator in order to foster a positive climate for students and reduce bullying and teasing	$7,000	$2,000	$2,000				
	Hire tutor coordinator to develop list of volunteer tutors and coordinate scheduling during and after school and on weekends for students that	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000				
	Provide after school transportation to allow students to participate in remediation opportunities	$15,000	$15,000					
	Develop summer school into a skills and adventure based experience in order to engage more student participation. (staffing, food, field trip entries and	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000				
	Provide technology in order to bring 21st Century tech skills to students and increase student engagement (Hardware, software and teacher training)	$30,000						
	Use Maura Hart to facilitate development of a school restructuring plan	$5,000						
	Hire Home School Liaison to promote parent involvement and development parent involvement	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000				
	Stipend for teacher leadership team to attend the Roots to Roadmaps Conference at Castleton College in	$1,500						
	Provide Responsive Classroom Training in order to improve classroom management and atmosphere					$4,000	$4,000	$4,000
Sub total		**$114,500**	**$66,000**	**$50,000**		**$4,000**	**$4,000**	**$4,000**

Graduation Rate

	Provide funding to provide transportation and food for college/vocational school visits through VSAC	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000				
	Contract with CFES(College For Every Student) to connect middle school students to experiences that will enhance college awareness.	$15,000	$10,000	$5,000				
Sub total		**$15,000**	**$12,000**	**$7,000**				

Special Education

	Training and support for teacher teams to develop co-teaching model. To include training, consultation, food, substitutes, and stipends.	$5,000						

					SIG				SU Support
Subtotal		$5,000							
Supervision of teachers									
	Develop leadership team capacity to participate in classroom walk-throughs to enhance instruction and teacher effective practices. Training, support,	$3,000							
	Purchase of TESA software, hardware, annual fee and training for principal to provide frequent formative assessment feedback to teachers	$3,500	$1,000	$1,000					
	Provide training and consultation to principal to improve teacher evaluation and feedback process. Include mentoring, materials, workshops, materials,	$10,000							
	Provide mentoring of new teachers.					$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	
Subtotal		$16,500	$1,000	$1,000		$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	
Grant Implementation									
	Hire .15 FTE SIG coordinator to assist principals and SU staff in the successful implementation of the grant strategies.	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000					
Subtotal									
					SIG Grant Total				SU Support Total
Total		$259,100	$125,100	$84,100	$468,300	$9,500	$12,500	$12,500	$34,500

ATTACHMENT B

INITIAL SELF ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR FACTORS FOR RAPID CHANGE IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

(As adapted from A Theory of Change, Richardson, 2009)

School Name: Bellows Falls Middle School

Superintendent (name): Joanna Haight

Superintendent (signature): _____ Date: 6/14/10

Major Factors Contributing to Rapid Change in School Improvement	Not Evident	Emerging	Strong
1. The Principal has communicated a sense of urgency with a prioritized plan for improvement and is present and recognized in the school as the instructional leader. The Principal can identify priorities for action and "quick wins."		✓	
2. All teachers and administrators know what a continuous improvement system is, how it works, and that the basis of that system is accountability through regular examination of student outcomes.			✓
3. The curriculum has been aligned to state standards and focused from K-12 and all teachers understand the main focal points that must be taught over the year. The curriculum is based on high expectations and rigorous requirements for all students.			
4. The schedule permits common planning time, grade level meetings, data team meetings, and after-school focus on curriculum and instruction. The schedule is focused on student academic and social success and does not get bogged down in several different and weakly defined initiatives.		✓	
5. Each grade level has common formative assessments that are given on a regular basis, tracked for each student, and reviewed at data team meetings.		✓	
6. A school data team reviews student progress on formative and other assessments and reports these results regularly to the faculty. There is a computerized school data system in place for tracking all student outcomes.		✓	
7. Professional development is delivered in schools and classrooms by experts among the staff or outside consultants, and is focused on areas identified as needing improvement by the school accountability system. Teachers share what they have learned and visit each others classrooms.		✓	
8. The teacher evaluation system is capable of identifying teachers who are not providing adequate instruction in the classroom, and remediation efforts are time limited.		✓	
9. Paraprofessionals must have an Associates Degree, must have passed a mathematics or reading test, and must have taken a district training program.			✓
10. The special education and student support system emphasizes regular classroom instruction, a response to intervention system, and an accountability system that is aligned with the formative assessment system and curricular expectations of the regular classroom.		✓	

11. Resources are equitably distributed across all classes and support systems.		✓	
12. Social and emotional support systems reflect the needs of the students and their resources.		✓	
13. Schools develop career and college readiness programs in middle school and continue those programs throughout high school with defined pathways to college, internships, and supports.		✓	
14. There are preschool, after-school, and summer programs available for all students needing more support.		✓	
15. There is evidence of community and business support or partnerships.		✓	

BFMS School Wide Action Plan

2010-2012

Developed with: Cheri McDaniel-Thomas, James McAuliffe, Sean Gould, Carla Aquadro, Brenda Forrest, Josh Ferenc, & Dennis Ladd

Vision Statement

We envision The Bellows Falls Middle School to be a place where

ALL MEMBERS OF THE LEARNING COMMUNITY STRIVE TO:

1. Engage in and promote lifelong learning

2. Have high expectations

3. Celebrate the achievement of high standards

4. Contribute to and promote positive school climate

5. Respect and recognize one another's passions, strengths, challenges and needs

6. Lead healthy lives

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We support the use of Medicaid Funds for the preschool program so that students will be ready to learn when they enter elementary school and therefore better prepared for BFMS

1

Bellows Falls Middle School
School-wide Action Plan
Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, Principal

Narrative:
Teams were represented. Parents were invited but none accepted. The P.T.O. and the Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC) gave feedback on NECAP/academic needs and parent involvement at the June meetings.

The Schoolwide Plan

1. Comprehensive Needs Assessment:
The Data Warehouse and NECAP results offer multitudes of disaggregated information that has been used to determine future areas of concentration. Additional student needs were identified through initial testing, progress monitoring, attendance reports, special ed service plan calculations, staff schedules and lesson plans. Close attention to staff qualifications, skills and talents were taken into consideration when developing staffing patterns and resource allocation. Data sources include AIMSweb (read & math), math computation pre & post tests, Gates MacGinitie ready test, Scholastic Reading inventory, math audit of Dan Heller and feedback from Mahesh Sharma, math consultant.

- Not AYP Math for free & reduced lunch students
- Writing still a weakness
- Reading made AYP, but scores are below average
- Free & Reduced in reading, math & writing performing below state average
- Some cohorts stronger than others. We need to plan for data analysis and be prepared to support weaker cohorts and free & reduced lunch students
- There is a strong connection with writing success to reading testing; and reading/writing success to math testing.
- Aligned curriculum being rolled out in math and literacy for the district; which has benchmarks for student knowledge at each grade level. Common assessments still need to be developed
- Special education below state averages
- Critical Friends Group are implemented to examine teacher practice – needs to continue.
- Other sources of data is AIMSweb and Gates MacGinitie.
- Implementation of PBS
- Improve parental involvement

2. Schoolwide Reform Strategies: This requirement focuses on strategies to deal with low income, migratory and at risk students. Bellows Falls Middle School is in compliance with the McKinney Vento law for reporting and supporting homeless children. Our student population that receives free or reduced meals hovers near 61%. Our EST/RTI, 504 and SPED teams, academic teams and CFG meet on a regular basis to support all at risk students.

3. Instruction by Highly Qualified Teachers: All teachers and paraprofessionals at BFMS meet the standards of the NCLB Act for highly qualified staff. We seek candidates that meet these requirements.

4. **Strategies to Attract Highly Qualified Teachers**: Internal advertising for new positions and the use of School Spring is adequate to attract highly qualified candidates. See above.

5. **High Quality and Ongoing Professional Development**: The District level administrative team, while planning the allocations for the Federal Grant, coordinates LEA wide professional development activities. Most teachers have been trained in the Kansas writing program and some in Collins. Science, math, social studies and literacy curriculum development and grade level meetings have supported teachers in their understanding and use of the grade level expectations. At the building level, BFMS advertises professional development opportunities for teachers, establishes teams and representatives to attend specific trainings and network meetings. Student needs are always the focus. Mahesh Sharma work is on-going.

6. **Strategies to Increase Parental Involvement**: We work with PIRC and the PTO to increase parent community engagement. We have developed a Solid Foundation needs assessment and action plan, which will be incorporated into our school-wide Action Plan.

7. **Transition Plans**: We work with the four elementary schools to provide smooth transitions for incoming students. Students leaving BFMS have opportunities to learn about and visit the Bellows Falls Union High School before attending there in ninth grade. Ongoing conversations and meetings between district principals ensure that students on EST, 504 and SPED plans have the best possible transition between schools. Elementary students are invited to plays and concerts at BFMS as well as our band presenting at the schools. We also take our students to high school plays. Sports teams from high school and academic teachers visit to explain the high school programs. High School teachers meet BFMS for level selection. Elementary students do tours and are invited for classroom visits. A tour night is offered for incoming parents and students.. Time arranged for meetings between teachers. Elementary schools fill out feedback forms for our teachers. On-going conversations on how to improve practices. Work on transition inside building Middle School awareness.

8. **Teacher Participation in Assessment decisions:**
Work ongoing at district level.

9. **Strategies to Address Areas of Need**: The Action Plan indicates how certified staff will be involved in the action steps of each part of the plan, as well as the continual analysis of new data and adjustments to the plan. CFG groups met frequently to discuss how to improve teacher practices.

10. **Coordination and integration of federal, State and Local Services and programs**: Where funding is necessary to support the implementation and progress of the action plan, funding sources are indicated. Coordination of resources to benefit student achievement remains the responsibility of the administrative team.

Bellows Falls Middle School Action Plan   2010 - 2012

Target Area: Reading

Goal: Increase % of students performing at proficient or better from 2009 results of 50% in math to the state average of 70

Objective	Action Steps	Who	When	Assessment	Done	Funding Source:
Analyze and respond to NECAP reading scores to improve student performance.	--Compile annual data on test results --Use data to alter instructional practices -Provide stipend for lead teacher to oversee reading initiatives	--Data facilitator, CFG/SPED Teachers, paraprof	--Ongoing --By winter, 2010	--Updated data charts --Improved NECAP scores --Group assess. determined by teacher		CFG SIG T
Use Lexia/ AIMSweb to track student performance in fluency.	--Give both bench-marks/progress monitoring -Train staff in Lexia use -Provide clerical support to staff for data entry --Compile data and share with reading teachers --Use data to alter instruction annually	-- CFG teachers --Data facilitator, data teams --Reading teachers,	-3 bench marks - Sept., Jan., June, ongoing monitor	--Student records -Gates -SRI --Fluency charts in classrooms -Improve AIMSweb -Improve Lexia		CFG T SIG
Analyze and respond to Gates scores to improve student performance	--Admin. pre/post tests, compile results --Use data to alter instruction	--Classroom teachers, data fac. --Reading teacher, data teams	-June admin.	--Indiv. student record sheets --Increased NECAP reading scores		CFG T
Provide extra reading support to low SES students, SPED students & students not proficient	--21C Homework club --CFG Summer school --Extra Reading block	--Certified teacher -- volunteers --Certified teachers -- All reading, CFG, SPED teacher, paras	-ongoing	--Record of attendance -AIMSweb improvement NECAP improvement --Teacher made group assess.		CFG T 21C ARRA
Provide professional development in reading -Provide teachers time to examine data & their practice & develop interventions.	--Use trainer to work with staff on reading practices --Apply new strategies in classrooms --Align practices with SU literacy com. benchmarks/ recommendations	--Reading teachers, data teams --Reading teachers, Lit. com. rep., data teams		--Teacher plans, NECAP, Gates, AIMSweb, --Data team meeting notes		CFG T

Target Area: Math

GOAL: Increase % of students performing at proficient or better from 2009 results of 33% in math to the state average of 65%

Objective	Action Steps	Who	When	Assessment	Done	Funding Source:
Analyze and respond to the NECAP & AYP scores over 2 years and track student performance.	--Tabulate data on test results --Discuss in data teams, alter math instructional practices as a result. -Math night -Provide stipend for lead teacher to oversee math initiatives	-- Data facilitator -- Data teams	-Winter, 2010 --Ongoing	--Revised data charts --Increased NECAP scores, samples of work that demonstrate changes in instructional practices		C.F.G.
Review and respond to formative assess.	--Unit end tests, teacher made, assessments, AIMSweb, other assess. to see if altered instruct needed -Provide clerical support to teach for data entry	--All math teachers, CFG Teachers, Data Facilitator	--Ongoing	AIMSweb graphs, class/stud record sheets, --Portfolio scores and rubrics -- pass on to next grade --Program assess and teacher input		C.F.G L SIG.
Align BFMS math practices with SU math committee outcomes	--New benchmarks to assess student progress – Compute Fluency Assessment and AIMSweb	--All math teachers, CFG Teachers, Data Facilitator	-June 2010	--Benchmarks, data team meeting notes on altered practices, + NECAP scores, assess, results		CFG L SIG
Provide extra math support to low SES, special education and students not proficient	--21C school homework club -- Summer school -Extra math blocks -Purchase math books	--Certified teacher -Volunteers -SPED teachers	-Ongoing	--Attendance, + NECAP scores records/increased assess. scores, AIMSweb increase --Staff and data team meeting notes		CFG L SIG ARRA IDEA ARRA

-Provide teachers time to examine data & their practice & develop interventions	-DI -RTI -CFG/Protocols Provide profess. dev. & coaching in math instruction & BEST practice.	-CFG & Core teachers -CFG facilitator	-Ongoing	Meeting notes - document change in work product -Improved scores	CFG L SIG ARRA
-Use Symphony & Study Island/AIMSweb to track student performance in fluency	-Give both benchmarks/progress monitoring -Train staff in Symphony & Study Island use -Provide clerical support to staff for data entry -Compile data and share with reading teachers -Use data to alter instruction annually	-CFG -Data facilitator, -Reading teachers data teams	-3 benchmarks – Sept, Jan., June Ongoing monitor	-Student records -Gates -SRI -Fluency charts in classrooms -Improve AIMSweb -Improve Symphony & Study Island	

CFG = Consolidated Federal Grant   SIG = School Improvement Grant   ARRA = American Recovery & Reinvestment Act
L = Local Budget   21C = 21st Century Grant   SES = Social Economic Status   OG = Other Grant Opportunities
ILT = Instructional Leadership Team will be responsible for Action Plan or will designate responsible parties   WB – WNESU Budget
PIRC = Parent Information Resource Center   IDEA ARRA = Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
ARRA = American Recovery & Reinvestment Act   BEST = Building Effective Supports For Teaching

Bellows Falls Middle School Action Plan

Target Area: Writing

Goal: Increase % of students performing at proficient or better from 2008 results of 40% to the state average of 48%

Objective	Action Steps	Who	When	Assessment	Done	Funding Source:
Analyze and respond to the 8th grade NECAP scores.	--Use data teams to look at data and create new strategies, monitor progress with formative assess. in classrooms	--Data teams and CFG data facilitator	--Ongoing	--Meeting notes		CFG
Coordinate writing efforts and grading system between grade levels and align them with the NECAP rubrics	--Align writing portfolio efforts between grades --Look at student work across grade levels and discuss standards of assessment --Use various systematic writing approaches in the classrooms (CFG funded prof. dev.): *Collins *Kansas (4-5) Winona Coaching -Provide teachers with professional development for writing language across curriculum	Data Facilitator All Teachers	--Ongoing	--Meeting notes, increased NECAP scores, writing portfolios to next grade --Meeting notes, increased NECAP scores --Teacher lesson plans, increased NECAP scores		CFG SIG
Provide extra writing support to low SES, special education and students not proficient	--21C school homework club -- Summer school -Extra writing blocks /	--Certified teacher -Volunteers -SPED teachers	-Ongoing	--Attendance, + NECAP scores records/increased assess. scores, AIMSweb increase		CFG SIG ARRA IDEA ARRA

Bellows Falls Middle School Action Plan

Target Area: School Culture

Goal: To Raise achievement through increased student and family engagement and system support.

Objective	Action Steps	Who	When	Assessment	Done	Funding Source
-Provide opportunities for student leadership & recognition	-Student Leadership Institute National Junior Honor Society -Peer Mediation -Continue No Bystander Crew	ILT	-Ongoing	-Meeting minutes		BEST L 21C Youth Services
-Consistent Transitions between & within school	-Work with WNESU -SU admin principals to continue improvement efforts	-SU admin -ILT	-Fall 2010	-Meeting minutes		L
-Increase parental involvement & communications	-Curriculum nights -Annual school report – newsletter -PR stipend -Home school liason -Continue work with PIRC -Volunteer co-ordinator -Website improvements -Connect Ed -Make the school a more welcome place -Electronic sign -PowerSchool Portal -Develop parent involvement procedure	ILT	-Ongoing	-Parent Survey		SIG CFG CFG
-Raise student standards	-Skill Acquisition -Investigate school uniforms -Develop Learning standards -Homework Procedure -ID cards	-ILT	-Summer & Fall 2010	-Meeting minutes		L CFG

Objective	Action Steps	Who	When	Assessment	Done	Funding Source
-Create a new school wide behavior plan	-Meet as a staff/discuss practices/needs -Create a new behavior plan, implement -Monitor effectiveness of new plan -Create team to track implementation	-Staff	-By Sept. 2010	-Staff meeting notes -Reduction in behavior incidences		L BEST SIG
-Gather staff and parent input on school climate	-Give parent survey in Jan., compile date -Discuss new behavior plan/implications on climate	-ILT	-By Jan. 2011	--Parent survey showing improvement		L
-Educate staff, students, parents about bullying, teasing and harassment	-District, staff and student training, CFG funded prof. dev. For staff	-WNESU -ILT	-By June, 2011	-Professional development records, guidance record		CFG L SIG
-Increase Technology in classrooms to support 21st Century learning objectives	-Provide training to teachers -Purchase class sets of netbooks -Increase interactive technology, such as Elmos, smart boards, clickers, brightlinks, doc. cameras	-ILT	-by Jan. 2011	-Inventory & PD participation		SIG CFG
-Increase frequency and quality of formative teacher feedback	-Purchase training software, hardware of TESA	-Principal	-By Jan. 2011	-Documentation of teacher feedback		SIG L
-Encourage students to post secondary education work with VSAC (VT Student Assistant Corporation) to do same	-Work with College For Every Student (CFES) to encourage college awareness	-Guidance & teacher	-Ongoing	-Student Participation		SIG L

ATTACHMENT E – Initial School Capacity Self Assessment

As adapted from A Theory of Action (Richardson, 2009)

School Name: _Bellows Fall Middle School_

Superintendent (name): _Blane Horante_

Superintendent (signature): _Signature of Blane J. Alexander_ Date: _6/14/10_

Answers from Survey Monkey

Factors for Assessing School Capacity to Improve/Actions to Take	Not Evident	Emerging	Strong
The Principal has communicated urgency, vision, and a plan	13%	39%	✓48%
The Principal is recognized as the instructional leader.	29%	26%	✓50%
All staff know how a continuous improvement system works.	17%	✓64%	19%
The curriculum is aligned and focused across and within grades.	4%	✓72%	20%
The curriculum is aligned with state standards.	8%	50%✓	51%
The curriculum reflects rigor.	9%	✓54%	43%
All students are expected to master the curriculum.	20%	✓56%	26%
The school has a data team that meets to review student outcomes and a computerized student data tracking system.	8%	46%	✓48%
All teachers review their student data regularly.	23%	✓49%	28%
Common formative assessments have been developed for each grade across all grades in the school and are tracked by the student data system.	21%	✓55%	25%
The schedule permits common planning time and is focused on academic improvement and social support.	26%	✓48%	26%
There is a warm and welcoming climate with firm expectations for acceptable behavior.	15%	40%	✓45%
Paraprofessionals have passed proficiency requirements.	11%	36%	✓53%
Professional development is provided in classrooms and is focused on school areas of need identified by the accountability system.	15%	32%	53%
The Principal is frequently in classrooms and the teacher evaluation system is effective in improving teaching and learning.	46%✓	✓46%	8%
Teachers reflect the climate of open communication by visiting one another's classes and sharing lessons and other materials.	41%✓	✓41%	18%
The special education and support systems are provided in regular classrooms, are based on the response to intervention system, and connected to the formative assessment system.	11%	✓47%	31%
Resources are equitably distributed across classes and support systems	31%	✓31%	✓39%

11

Social and emotional support systems are adequate for the student needs.	6%	✓ 66%	28%	
There are preschool, after school, and summer programs for all students.	6%	30%	64%	
There is evidence of business and community support.	9%	✓ 55%	36%	
Career and college readiness programs begin in middle school and offer pathways to college, internships, and supports in high school.	16%	25%	12%	N/A 48%

Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results
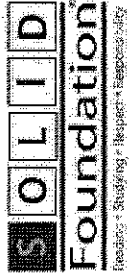
Source: Vermont Department of Health

STATEWIDE

Reported Behavior	Racial or ethnic minority weighted n=2,465	White non-Hispanic weighted n=33,135
Safety belt use (never, rarely, or sometimes)*	28%	16%
Vomited or took laxatives to control their weight (during the past 30 days)*	9%	3%
Skipped school due to feeling unsafe on route to or at school (during past 30 days)*	11%	5%
Threatened or injured with a weapon at school (during the past 12 months)*	14%	5%
Was bullied (during past 30 days)*	24%	15%
Physical fighting (during past 12 months)*	40%	26%
Smoked cigarettes (during past 30 days)*	24%	15%
Binge drinking (during past 30 days)	27%	20%
Marijuana use (during past 30 days)	30%	21%
Cocaine use (during past 30 days)*	12%	3%
Heroin use (during lifetime)*	12%	2%
Injected drugs (during lifetime)*	10%	2%
Attempted suicide (during past 12 months)*	11%	4%

WINDHAM COUNTY

Reported Behavior	Racial or ethnic minority n=235	White non-Hispanic n=1233
Safety belt use (never, rarely, or sometimes)*	30%	18%
Vomited or took laxatives to control their weight (during the past 30 days)*	10%	3%
Skipped school because of feeling unsafe on route to or at school (during past 30 days)*	9%	3%
Threatened or injured with a weapon at school (during the past 12 months)*	16%	6%
Was bullied (during past 30 days)	18%	14%
Physical fighting (during past 12 months)*	45%	27%
Smoked cigarettes (during past 30 days)*	27%	18%
Binge drinking (during past 30 days)	27%	23%
Marijuana use (during past 30 days)	32%	28%
Cocaine use (during past 30 days)*	11%	3%
Heroin use (during lifetime)*	11%	3%
Injected drugs (during lifetime)*	10%	2%
Attempted suicide (during past 12 months)*	21%	8%

Windham County minority students represent 9.5% of minority sample size.

Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity

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Needs Assessment

From Analysis to Action Plan

Bellows Falls Middle School
Completed: 05/11/2010

Review your self-assessment: Areas of strength. Consider all sections of the School Information Form, Policy Analysis (rubrics), and survey results. Look for areas where you rated your school community the highest. Now list below the 5 areas of greatest strength the analysis reveals about your school community.

Strength 1:   Positive Efforts directed towards Student Community
                Students as leaders, No bystanders/no bullying
                Social Skills Group
                Student Council

Strength 2:   Positive School Climate for Adults
                Parents are valued, competent, supported and accountable

Strength 3:   Behavior Management (new system built by staff)
                Consistency, High Expectations

Strength 4:   Calm climate, positive experience

Strength 5:   Developing Supports for Students to drive positive Outcomes
                Align Curriculum
                Deveopment of Professional Learning Communities
                Hiring of Math Consultant

Your areas of strength deserve celebration and communication. How will you let everyone in your school community know the special strengths of the school community revealed by the people who know it best–parents and teachers?

Step up
Roadshow to sending schools
Transition Open House
Newsletter (3-5x/yr)
Improved/updated website
Phone system to call home (Connect Ed)
Press Releases? Articles for Newspaper?

Review of self-assessment: Areas that need attention.   What areas of your school community most need attention?

Now that you have reviewed the School Information Form, Policy Analysis (rubrics), and survey results, you will discuss ways to strengthen your school community. Listed below are 25 items that may be included in your Action Plan. You will discuss them briefly and then assign teams to develop plans for each of the major areas--Policies, Shared Leadership, Communication, Education, and Connection. The teams will report their plans and recommendations to this group, and you will form them into an Action Plan and put the plan into action over the next year.

Take a look at the list of items and give the teams an idea of your priorities at this time. Rate each item below: **3 for Needs Attention/High Priority, 2 for Needs Improvement/Low Priority, and 1 for Strength/No Improvement Needed.** Upon further consideration, the teams may convince you to change your priorities.   They may also think of other activities to recommend within their area of focus.

Building Block: Policies

The Policy Analysis includes an evaluation of each of your key policy documents. All of your policy documents should be reviewed and improved as much as possible.   They will be high priorities unless the evaluation shows that they are already

_1_   1. District Parent Involvement Policy

_3_   2. School Parent Involvement Policy

_1_   3. Compact (see Compact and Self-Rating in Resource Manual)

_2_   4. Homework Policy (see Homework Policy and Monitoring in Resource Manual)

_2_   5. Student Report Card

_1_   6. Parent Visits to Classroom (see Welcoming Place in Resource Manual)

Building Block: Shared Leadership

The School Information Form, in About Your School, lists the ways parents are involved in decision making and leadership roles at your school. Three key groups that typically involve parents are the School Improvement Team, Parent-Teacher Organization, and School Community Council. The School Community Council may go by a variety of names, but is made up of the principal, teacher representatives, and parent representatives and focuses on areas of overlapping responsibility between the school and the home. The topics you are using to develop an action plan are common agenda items for a School Community Council that meets regularly.

_1_   7. School Improvement Team

Do you need to change the way your School Improvement Team is organized and operates to increase participation by parents? If so, what changes?

_1_   8. Parent-Teacher Organization

Do you need to change the way your Parent-Teacher Organization is organized and operates to give it a greater focus on the school's priorities? If so, what changes?

_1_   9. School Community Council

Would a School Community Council be useful in your school? If so, how will you organize and operate one?

Building Block: Communication

Review your School Information Form, Policy Analysis (rubrics), and survey results for items related to the following communication topics.

<u>1</u>   10. Compact (See Compact and Self-Rating in Resource Manual)

The Compact is a key communication tool. In reviewing the policies, you have considered what the Compact says. It is also important to consider how you use it as a communication tool. The Resource Manual provides suggestions for effective use of the Compact.

<u>1</u>   11. Homework (See Homework Policy and Monitoring in Resource Manual)

The Homework Policy is a key communication tool. In reviewing your policies, you have considered what the Homework Policy says. It is also important to consider how you use it as a communication tool. The Resource Manual provides: a) suggestions for effective use of the Homework Policy, and b) a system to monitor homework practices.

<u>1</u>   12. Teacher-Parent Communication

Which of the following teacher-parent communication methods do you want to add for your school?

☐   E-mail between teachers and parents

☐   Teacher telephone calls to parents

☐   Teacher notes to parents and parent notes to teachers (see Happy Grams in Resource Manual)

☐   Web-based reporting of student progress

<u>3</u>   13. School-Parent Communication

Which of the following school-parent communication methods do you want to add for your school?

☐   Website with information for parents

☐   Newsletter that includes articles by parents, information on home support for learning, and announcement of parent activities

☑   Parent Bulletin Board

Building Block: Education

Review your School Information Form, Policy Analysis (rubrics), and survey report for items related to the following education topics.

Parents benefit from opportunities to learn more about their role in their children's learning. Your school can provide learning opportunities for parents in many ways.

<u>3</u>   14. Learning Standards (see Learning Standards in Resource Manual)

How do you help parents understand learning standards and their role in their children's mastery of the standards? What more might you do?

Building Block: Education (cont.)

_3_   15.   Parent-Child Interactions (see Parent-Child Interaction in Resource Manual)

Parents can learn what their children are doing in school and can show support for their children's learning by engaging in home activities that require parent-child interaction. These "links" connect the school curriculum to the home and bring parents and children together.

_3_   16.   Family Resource Library (see Family Resource Library in Resource Manual)

One way to provide more information about parenting and the parents' role in children's education is through a Family Resource Library - books, videos, and other materials that parents may check out from the school library or a special library for parents.

_1_   17.   Training for Parents and Other Classroom and Office Volunteers

If you count on parents and community members to serve as volunteers in classrooms, on field trips, and in the office, how do you train them for these roles? What materials do you provide them to explain their roles?

_2_   18.   Courses and Workshops for Parents (see Parent Education in Resource Manual)

The Resource Manual includes curriculum for a variety of courses and workshops for parents on such topics as Studying at Home, Reading at Home, and Raising Good Kids. The Manual also includes materials for a workshop for parents and teachers called Working Together for Student Success and materials for a workshop for teachers on Parents and Learning. Offering workshops and courses for parents takes a lot of preparation and planning.

Building Block: Connection

Review your School Information Form, Policy Analysis (rubrics), and survey results for items related to the following connection topics.

Connection is the face-to-face association of parents, students, and school personnel. Typical connections in a school include the Open House and Parent-Student-Teacher Conference. The Resource Manual provides suggestions for making these and other connections effective in supporting students' learning. The Manual also includes ways to plan home visits and home gatherings and training for the home visitors (teachers, parents, or community members train for this purpose.)

_1_   19.   Open House (see Open Houses in Resource Manual)

Most schools hold Open Houses. It is a good idea to consider how Open Houses can be most effectively used to help parents, teachers, and students understand their roles in students' mastery of learning standards and their success in school.

_1_   20.   Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences (see Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences in Resource Manual)

The Resource Manual provides suggestions for planning Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences that make the best use of these occasions.

_3_   21.   Welcoming Place (see Welcoming Place in Resource Manual)

You can always benefit from making your school a more friendly and welcoming place for all parents. The Resource Manual provides suggestions.

_2_   22.   Family Nights (see Family Nights in Resource Manual)

Most schools hold Family Nights, often as Family Reading Nights, Math Nights, or Turn-Off-the-TV Nights. The Resource Manual includes suggestions for successful Family Nights that focus on student learning and provide interactive, parent-child activities.

Building Block: Connection (cont.)

___1___ 23. Home Visits (see Home Visits in Resource Manual)

Home Visits are a gratifying connection between the school and home when planned properly. The school may target particular grade levels for the visits.

___1___ 24. Home Gatherings (see Home Gatherings in Resource Manual)

In a Home Gathering, the host parents invite a few other parents to their home. A teacher is invited to join them. The informal gathering follows an agenda to encourage discussion of the mutual roles of parents and teachers in children's learning.

___3___ 25. Parent Room

Some schools designate a room as the Parent Room, a place for the Family Resource Library and a place where parents can meet. Is a Parent Room a good idea for your school?

Planning Teams

Developing Action Plans for each of the five sections analyzed in this report takes time and discussion. Your task is to develop plans and recommendations for each of the five sections within the next six weeks so that the five sectional plans, together, will become your master Action Plan.

One way to divide the work is to form a team for each section. The teams can then be working simultaneously over the next six weeks to develop the section plans and recommendations. Another way is for this group to schedule a series of meetings and tackle the sections one by one. Or perhaps you can divide the sections among two or three teams. Below, decide who will focus on each sectional plan. You may have different people on each team, the same people on all teams, or some of each. After forming the teams, you will schedule the times when they will meet.

Policy Review Team
A Policy Review Team can review the policies and make recommendations for their development and improvement. The Policy Review Team may include people not present for this Action Plan meeting.

→ Who will serve on the Policy Review Team?

Representative from Solid Foundation Team, parent(s), faculty member(s), member of administration

Shared Leadership Team
A Shared Leadership Team can review your shared leadership opportunities and make recommendations for their development and improvement. The Shared Leadership Team may include people not present for this Action Plan meeting.

→ Who will serve on the Shared Leadership Team?

No items identified as priority for this Block-no team needed at present

Communication Team
A Communication Team can review your communication methods and make recommendations for their development and improvement. The Communication Team may include people not present for this Action Plan meeting.

→ Who will serve on the Communication Team?

Representative from Solid Foundation Team, parent(s), faculty member(s), member of administration

Education Team

An Education Team can review your parent education practices and make recommendations for their development and improvement. The Education Team may include people not present for this Action Plan meeting.

→ Who will serve on the Education Team?

Representative from Solid Foundation Team, parent(s), faculty member(s), member of administration

Connection Team

A Connection Team can review your "connections" and make recommendations for their development and improvement. The Connection Team may include people not present for this Action Plan meeting.

→ Who will serve on the Connection Team?

Representative from Solid Foundation Team, parent(s), faculty member(s), member of administration

From Plan to Action

Your goal is to develop an Action Plan within six weeks. The final Action Plan will be comprised of the five sectional plans, developed by the planning teams. The sectional plans will be completed within one month so that the whole group can then re-convene, review the sectional plans, refine them as necessary, and complete the final Action Plan.

	Date of Meeting	Time of Meeting	Location
Policies	07/01/2010	by email	n/a
Shared Leadership	07/01/2010	by email	n/a
Communication	07/01/2010	by email	n/a
Education	07/01/2010	by email	n/a
Connection	07/01/2010	by email	n/a

When will the group re-convene to review the sectional plans and form a final Action Plan (within the next six weeks)?

Meeting to Approve Final Action Plan and Recommendations:

Date of Meeting	Time of Meeting	Location
09/07/2010	17:30	BFMS Library

Action Plan for Building Block:

Communication

Topic:	Parent Bulletin Board
Objective:	Convert existing bulletin board by main office for use as a Parent Bulletin Board
Measure of Success:	Bulletin board has been converted and parent-specific items are posted
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Remove existing materials and relocate, then create eye pleasing bulletin board for parents	08/30/2010	PTO Leadership & Faculty	
Create electronic version of parent bulletin board for those parents that do not come into the school and would prefer to view electronically	01/01/2011	PTO Leadership	

Topic:	Public Information Officer
Objective:	Recruit for a parent volunteer to serve as public information officer/media specialist to advertise school's events and successes in local media
Measure of Success:	Volunteer is named and begins operations
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Publicize need for this position, ask for volunteer(s)	08/30/2010	PTO Leadership	
Provide guidelines and expectations for position	08/30/2010	Principal & PTO Leadership	

Topic:	Future Student Communication
Objective:	Improve communication with students and their families not yet enrolled (feeder schools)
Measure of Success:	One additional method of communication identified to meet the needs of this population
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed

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Action Plan for Building Block:

Group meets to discuss and come up with one additional way to communicate with families   06/01/2011   Administration, PTO
of students not yet enrolled

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Action Plan for Building Block:

Connection

Topic:	Welcoming Place
Objective:	Committee formed to increase Family Friendliness of School
Measure of Success:	Changes are chosen and implemented
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Group meets to review research from SF Team and identifies items to implement	06/01/2011	Principal, Teacher, Custodian, Parent	

Topic:	Parent Room
Objective:	Existing bookshelf in library expanded and advertised
Measure of Success:	Use of materials by parents
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Materials purchase discussed in Education block. Once materials in place, advertise this resource to families and encourage use	08/30/2010	Administration & PTO Leadership	

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Action Plan for Building Block:

Education

Topic:	Learning Standards
Objective:	Convene committee to study best methods for educating parents on the Standards
Measure of Success:	Method(s) identified and implemented
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Group named and meets to discuss and implement best method for publicizing standards	01/01/2011	Faculty & PTO Leadership	

Topic:	Parent-Child Interaction
Objective:	Group formed to discuss potential of creating/suggesting activities for families (e.g. TV turn off week, family dinner 1x/week)
Measure of Success:	Suggestions are advertised using a variety of media
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Group meets to discuss viability of this objective, and develop activities and/or suggestions for families	01/01/2010	PTO Leadership, Faculty member	

Topic:	Family Resource Library
Objective:	Review and purchase materials for existing Parent Resource space in school library
Measure of Success:	Items purchased and publicized
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Potential items reviewed and purchased	08/30/2010	Principal & PTO Leadership	

Action Plan for Building Block:
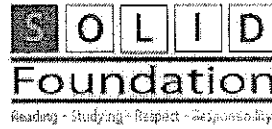
Policies

Topic:	Parent Involvement PROCEDURE
Objective:	Develop document with input from parents, teachers, and administration, that meets the needs of school and community
Measure of Success:	Procedure written and put into practice
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Meet to review research from SF team, and craft procedure	11/15/2010	Parents, Faculty, & Administration	

Topic:	Homework PROCEDURE
Objective:	Create document that gives guidelines to families and teachers concerning homework purpose, type, duration & frequency (by grade level)
Measure of Success:	Document created and put into practice
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Review research presented by SF team and write procedure	01/01/2011	Parents, Faculty, Adminsitration	

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Action Plan for Building Block:

Shared Leadership

Topic:	School Improvement Team
Objective:	Testing the system
Measure of Success:	Testing the system
Outcomes:	

Tasks	Target Date	Responsibility	Date Completed
Testing the system	6/4/2010	Janis	

School Name: Bellows Falls Middle School (PSO24)

SU: Windham Northeast SU

This data is referenced under item 1 on page 13 of the SIG application

		2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Graduation Rate (if elementary school, list rate for the high school in the SU)		63.92%	72.73%	School to provide this data for current year
Drop-out Rate (if elementary school, list rate for the high school in the SU)		7.01%	5.11%	School to provide this data for current year
Discipline Referrals		86	43	School provides data for this column for current year (new CIRS data not due until 7-15-10)
School Action Plan priorities	School supplies this data			
Highly Qualified Teacher data	Data housed at school/SU [signature]			
Child count by disability category:	Developmental Delay	0	0	0
	Learning Impairment	3	3	3
	Specific Learning Disability	14	16	16
	Visual Impairment	0	0	0
	Deafness/Hard of Hearing	0	0	0
	Speech or Language Impairment	4	4	5
	Orthopedic Impairment	0	0	0
	Other Health Impairment	16	16	18
	Emotional Disturbance	10	9	6
	Autism Spectrum Disorder	4	2	2
	Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0	0
	Deaf-Blindness	0	0	0
	Multiple Disabilities	0	1	2

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS REPORT   June 11, 2010

SCHOOL	TOTAL	Licensure Levels*				College Degree		Highly Qualified Status
		% LEVEL I	% LEVEL II	% LEVEL I & II	% PROVISIONAL	% Bachelors	% Masters	%HQT
BF MIDDLE SCHOOL	31	3%	77%	3%	19%	52.00%	48.00%	100%
WESTMINSTER SCHOOLS	28	25%	71%	4%	4%	36.00%	64.00%	100%

* Licensure Levels may not add up to 100% because teachers may possess multiple licenses.